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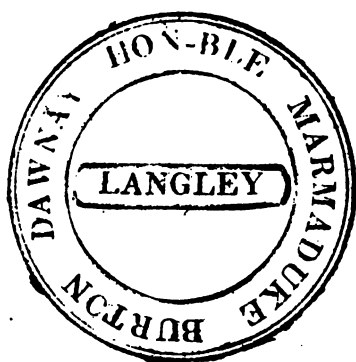
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INCIDENTS OF TRAVEL
IN
EGYPT, ARABIA PETRÆA,
AND
THE HOLY LAND.

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INCIDENTS OF TRAVEL

IN

EGYPT, ARABIA PETRÆA, THE HOLY LAND, ETC.

CHAPTER I.

The Caravan. — A sudden Change of Purpose. — Perils of a Storm. — Comfortless Repentance. — Solitude. — A Woman and a Chase. — A Patriarchal Feast. — Condition of the Arab Women. — Hospitality. — No refusing a good Offer. — A Dilemma.

My caravan consisted of five camels, four Arabs, Paul, and myself. We moved silently down the valley, and I tried hard to fasten my thoughts upon Gaza, the strong city of the Philistines, the city of Delilah and Samson, and to amuse my discontented spirit with imagining the gates which he carried away, and the temple which he pulled down; but it would not do; Petra, the rock of Edom, the excavated city, was uppermost in my mind. We had been marching in perfect silence about four hours, and I was sitting carelessly on my dromedary, thinking of everything but what I saw, when Toualeb pointed to a narrow opening in the mountain as the road to Akaba. I raised my head unconsciously, and it struck me

all of a sudden, that I was perfectly recovered, and fit for any journey. It was a day such as can only be seen in the mountainous desert of Arabia, presenting a clearness and purity in the atmosphere, and a gentle freshness in the air, which might almost bring to life a dying man. I stretched myself, and brandished my Nubian club; my arm seemed nerved with uncommon vigour; I rose in my saddle, strong as the slayer of the Philistines, and, turning the head of my dromedary towards the opening in the mountains, called out briefly and decidedly, — “To Akaba and Petra.” Paul was astonished; he took the pipe from his mouth, and for a moment paused; then knocking out the ashes, he slipped from his dromedary and ran up to the side of mine, looking up in my face with an expression of countenance that seemed to intimate strong suspicions of my sanity. After gazing at me as steadfastly as he could without being impertinent, he went away, still apparently in doubt, and I soon saw him following with Toualeb, in earnest conversation. Toualeb was even more astonished than Paul. The Arabs are not used to any of these mercurial changes of humour; and, according to their notion, if a man sets out for Gaza, he must go to Gaza: they cannot conceive how one in his right reason can change his mind; and Toualeb would have been very easily persuaded that an evil spirit was hurrying me on, particularly as, like Paul, from the beginning he had opposed my going by Petra and Idumea. Finding me resolute, how-

ever, he soon began to run, and brought back the camels, which were some distance in advance, and for several hours we moved on in perfect silence through the wild and rugged defile.

The mountains on each side were high, broken, and rugged, and ever presenting the same appearance of extreme old age. The road, if road it might be called, was rougher than any I had yet travelled: it was the only opening among the mountains by which we could pass at all, made by the hand of Nature, and so encumbered with fallen rocks that it was exceedingly difficult for our camels to advance. I did not intend to push far that day; and a little before dark I proposed to encamp in a narrow pass between the mountains, where there was barely room to pitch our tents; but appearances threatened rain, and Toualeb, pointing to the accumulation of stones and rocks which had fallen from the mountain and been washed through the pass, told me it would be a dangerous place to spend the night in. There was no earth to drink the falling rain, and, pouring down the hard and naked mountain sides, it formed a torrent in the pass, which hurried and dashed along, gathering force at every moment, and carrying with it bodies of sand and stones that would have crushed to atoms any obstruction they might meet in their resistless progress. I felt at once the force of the suggestion; and as I had no idea of being disturbed in the night by such a knock at the door of my tent as one of these gigantic missiles would have made, we kept

on our difficult way. At dark we were still in the ravine. Toualeb was right in his apprehensions: for some time before we reached the end of the pass the rain was falling in torrents, the rocks and stones were washing under our feet, and we heard the loud roar of thunder, and saw the forked lightning play among the mountain-tops. It was two hours after dark before we reached a place where it was prudent to encamp. We pitched our tent in the open valley; the thunder was rumbling, and ever and anon bursting with a terrific crash among the riven mountains, and the red lightning was flashing around the hoary head of Sinai. It was a scene for a poet or painter; but, under the circumstances, I would have given all its sublimity for a pair of dry pantaloons. Thunder and lightning among mountains are exceedingly sublime, and excellent things to talk about in a ball-room, or by the fireside; but, my word for it, a man travelling in the Desert has other things to think of. Everything is wet and sloppy; the wind catches under his tent before he can get it pinned down; and when it is fastened, and he finds his tight canvass turning the water like a cemented roof, and begins to rub his hands and feel himself comfortable, he finds but the beginning of trouble in a wet mat and coverlet.

I was but poorly prepared for a change like this, for I had been so long used to a clear, unclouded sky, that I almost considered myself beyond the reach of the changing elements. It was the beauty of the weather more than anything

else that had tempted me to turn off from the road to Gaza ; and, hardly equal to this change of scene, my heart almost sank within me. I reproached myself as if for a wilful and unjustifiable disregard of prudence, and no writer on moral duties could have written a better lecture than I inflicted upon myself that evening. In wet clothes I was literally sitting on the stool of repentance. Drooping and disheartened, I told Paul that I was already punished for my temerity, and the next morning I would go back and resume the road to Gaza. For the night, however, there was but one thing to be done, and that was, to sleep if I could, and sleep I did. A man who rides all day upon a dromedary must sleep, come what may, and even thunder among the mountains of Sinai cannot wake him. Daylight brought back my courage; the storm was over; the sun was shining brightly as I ever saw it even in the East; and again there was the same clear and refreshing atmosphere that had beguiled me from my prudent resolution. I too was changed again; and, in answer to the suggestion of Paul, that we should retrace our steps, I pointed towards Akaba, and gave the brief and emphatic order, "Forward!"

We continued for several hours along the valley, which was closely bounded on either side by mountains, not high, but bare, cracked, and crumbling into fragments. The tops had apparently once been lofty and pointed, but time and the action of the elements had changed their character. The summits had crumbled and fallen, so as to expose on

every side a rounded surface, and the idea constantly present to my mind was, that the whole range had been shaken by an Almighty hand, — shaken so as to break the rugged surface of the mountains, but not with sufficient force to dash them into pieces: I could not help thinking that with another shock the whole mass would fall in ruins. I had often remarked the silence and stillness of the Desert, but never had I been so forcibly impressed with this peculiarity as since I left the convent. The idea was constantly present to my mind, “How still, — how almost fearfully still!” The mountains were bare of verdure; there were no shrubs or bushes, and no rustling of the wind; and the quiet was like that of the ocean in a perfect calm, when there is not a breath of air to curl a wave, or shake the smallest fold in the lazy sail that hangs useless from the yard. Occasionally we disturbed a hare or a partridge, but we had not met a human being since we left the convent. Once we saw the track of a solitary dromedary, the prints of his feet deeply bedded in the sand, as if urged by one hurrying with hot haste, — perhaps some Bedouin robber flying to his tent among the mountains with the plunder of some Desert victim: we followed it for more than an hour, and when we lost sight of it on the rocky road, I felt as if we were more lonely than before.

I was thinking what an incident it would be in the life of one used to the hurrying bustle of steam-boats and rail-roads, to travel for days through this oldest of countries without meeting a

living being ; and, as far as I could understand, it might well be so ; there was no trade even for small caravans, and years passed by without any person, even an Arab, travelling this road. Toualeb had been over it but once, and that was ten years before, when he accompanied M. Laborde on his way to Petra. I knew that there were Bedouin tents among the mountains, but, unless by accident, we might pass through without seeing any of them ; and I was speculating on the chances of our not meeting a single creature, when Paul cried out that he saw a woman ; and, soon after repeating the exclamation, dismounted and gave chase. Toualeb ran after him, and in another moment or two I caught a glimpse and followed.

I have before mentioned that, among these barren and desolate mountains, there was frequently a small space of ground, near some fountain or deposit of water, known only to the Arabs, capable of producing a scanty crop of grass to pasture a few camels and a small flock of sheep or goats. There the Bedouin pitches his tent, and remains till the scanty product is consumed ; and then packs up his household goods, and seeks another pasture ground. The Bedouins are essentially a pastoral people ; their only riches are their flocks and herds, their home is in the wide desert, and they have no local attachments ; to-day they pitch their tent among the mountains, to-morrow in the plain ; and wherever they plant themselves for the time, all that they have on earth, wife, children, and friends, are immediately around

them. In fact, the life of the Bedouin, his appearance and habits, are precisely the same as those of the patriarchs of old. Abraham himself, the first of the patriarchs, was a Bedouin, and four thousand years have not made the slightest alteration in the character and habits of this extraordinary people. Read of the patriarchs in the Bible, and it is the best description you can have of pastoral life in the East at the present day.

The woman whom we had pursued belonged to the tent of a Bedouin not far from our road, but completely hidden from our view ; and when overtaken by Toualeb, she recognised in him a friend of her tribe, and in the same spirit, and almost in the same words which would have been used by her ancestors four thousand years ago, she asked us to her tent, and promised us a lamb or a kid for supper. Her husband was stretched on the ground in front of his tent, and welcomed us with an air and manner that belonged to the Desert, but which a king on his throne could not have excelled. He was the embodied personification of all my conceptions of a patriarch. A large loose frock, a striped handkerchief on his head, bare legs, sandals on his feet, and a long white beard, formed the outward man. Almost immediately after we were seated he took his shepherd's crook, and, assisted by his son, selected a lamb from the flock for the evening meal ; and now I would fain prolong the illusion of this pastoral scene. To stop at the door of an Arab's tent, and partake with him of a lamb or kid prepared by his hospi-

table hands, all sitting together on the ground, and provided with no other implements than those which Nature gave us, is a picture of primitive and captivating simplicity ; but the details were such as to destroy for ever all its poetry, and take away all relish for patriarchal feasts. While we were taking coffee the lamb lay bleating in our ears, as if conscious of its coming fate. The coffee drunk, and the pipe smoked, our host arose and laid his hand upon the victim ; the long sword which he wore over his shoulder was quickly drawn ; one man held the head, and another the hind legs ; and, with a rapidity almost inconceivable, it was killed and dressed, and its smoking entrails, yet curling with life, were broiling on the fire.

I was the guest of the evening, and had no reason to complain of the civility of my entertainer ; for, with the air of a well-bred host, and an epicure to boot, he drew from the burning coals one of the daintiest pieces, about a yard and a half in length, and rolling one end between the palms of his hands to a tapering point, broke off about a foot and handed it to me. Now I was by no means dainty ; I could live upon the coarsest fare ; and all the little luxuries of tables, knives and forks, were of very little moment in my estimation : I was prepared to go full length in this patriarchal feast. But my indifference was not proof against the convivial elegances of my Bedouin companions : and as I saw yard after yard disappear, like long strings of macaroni, down

their capacious throats, I was cured of all poetical associations and my appetite together.

In the tent of the Arabian patriarch, woman, the pride, the ornament, and the charm of domestic life, is the mere household drudge. In vain may one listen for her light footstep, or look to find her by the side of her natural lord, giving a richer charm to the hospitality he is extending to a stranger. It would repay one for much of the toil and monotony of a journey in the Desert, if, when by chance he found himself at a Bedouin tent, he could be greeted by her sunny smile. Dark and swarthy as she is, and poor and ignorant, it would pay the traveller for many a weary hour to receive his welcome from the lips of an Arabian girl; but this the customs of the tribes forbid. When the stranger approaches, the woman retires; and so completely is she accustomed to this seclusion, that, however closely he may watch, he can never catch her even peeping at him from behind a screen or partition of the tent: curiosity, which in civilized life is so universally imputed to the daughters of Eve, seems entirely unknown to the sex in this wild region. Nor is this the worst of her lot. Even when alone the wife of the Bedouin is not regarded as his equal: the holy companionship of wedded life has between them no existence. Even when no guest is present, she never eats with him. I have seen the father and sons sit down together, and, when they had withdrawn from the tent, the mother and daughters came in to what was left:—away,

then, with all dreams of superior happiness in this more primitive condition of society. Captivating as is the wild idea of roving abroad at will, unfettered by the restraints of law or of conventional observances, the meanest tenant of a log-hut in our western prairies has sources of happiness which the wandering Arab can never know. A spirit of perfect weariness and dissatisfaction with the world might drive a man to the Desert ; and, after having fallen into the indolent and mere animal habits of savage life, he might find it difficult to return to the wholesome restraints and duties of society ; but I am satisfied that it is sheer affectation or ignorance in which a member of the civilized family sighs, or pretends to sigh, for the imagined delights of an untried freedom. For my own part, I had long been satisfied of this truth, and did not need the cumulative evidence of my visit to the Bedouin's tent. He would have had me sleep under its shelter, but I knew that in all the Bedouin tents there were multitudes of enemies to rest, — creatures that murder sleep, — and I preferred the solitude of my own.

One word as to the hospitality of the Arabs. I had read beautiful descriptions of its manifestation, and in some way or other had gathered up the notion that the Bedouin would be offended by an offer to reward his hospitality with a price ; but, feeling naturally anxious not to make a blunder on either side of a question so delicate, I applied to my guide Toualeb for information on the subject. His answer was brief and explicit. He

said there was no obligation to give or pay, it being the custom of the Bedouins (among friendly tribes) to ask the wayfaring man into his tent, give him food and shelter, and send him on his way in the morning ; that I could give or not, as I pleased ; but that, if I did not, the hospitable host would wish his lamb alive again ; and from the exceeding satisfaction with which that estimable person received my parting gift, I am very sure that in this instance, at least, I did better in taking Toualeb's knowledge of his people for my guide than I should have done by acting upon what I had read in books. It may be that, if I had gone among them poor and friendless, I should have been received in the same manner, and nothing would have been expected or received from me ; but I am inclined to think, from what I saw afterward, that in such case the lamb would have been spared for a longer term of existence, and the hospitality confined to a dip into the dish and a mat at the door of the tent.

Early in the morning we left the tent of our Bedouin landlord. We were still among mountains ; at every moment a new view presented itself, wild, fanciful, and picturesque ; and in the distance was still visible the long range of dark mountains bordering the Red Sea. Our course was now directly for this sea, but the mountain range appeared so contiguous and unbroken that there seemed no way of getting to it but by crossing their rugged summits. There was a way, however ; an opening which we could not distin-

guish at so great a distance, and for some time Toualeb was at a loss. He was so purblind that he could scarcely distinguish me from one of his dark companions, yet he could read the firmament like a book, and mark the proportion of the almost shapeless mountains ; but he was uncertain how to hit precisely the opening by which we must pass through. There was no danger of our losing ourselves, and the only hazard was that of wasting a day in the search ; but, fortunately, at the commencement of our perplexity, we came upon a Bedouin whose tent was at the foot of the mountain ; and, under his instructions, we pushed on with confidence and ultimate success.

CHAPTER II.

Evening Amusements.—A Trial of the Feelings.—A Disappointment.—A Santon of the Desert.—An Arab Fisherman.—Turkish Costume.—A potent Official.—A comfortless Sick-room.—A Visit from the Sheik.—Interested Friendship.—Akaba.—The El Alouins.—Questionable Piety.

It was late in the afternoon when our little caravan entered the narrow opening, presenting itself like a natural door between precipitous rocks several hundred feet in height. Passing this, and continuing onward to a vast amphitheatre, or hollow square of lofty rocks, through a larger opening on our left, we again saw the dark waters of the Red Sea. About midway across I dismounted from my dromedary to survey the scene around me; and, among the many of high interest presented to the traveller in the wilderness of Sinai, I remember none more striking and impressive. It was neither so dreary and desolate, nor so wild and terrible as others I had seen, but different from all. The door by which we entered was undistinguishable, the rocks in the background completely closing it to the sight: on all sides, except towards the sea, and forming almost a perfect square, were the naked faces of the rock, lofty, smooth, and regular, like the excavated sides of an ancient quarry, and quiet to that extraordi-

nary and indescribable degree of which I have already spoken. Descending towards the opening that led to the sea, directly under us, was an extensive and sandy plain, reaching to its very margin; and nearly opposite, rising abruptly from the clear waters, a long unbroken range of stern and rugged mountains, their dark irregular outline finely contrasted with the level surface at their feet, while the sea itself extended on the right and left as far as the eye could reach in that clear atmosphere; but the first stage of my journey, the head of the gulf, and the little fortress of Akaba, were still invisible.

We rode about an hour along the shore, passing at a distance the tents of some Bedouins; and, about an hour before dark, encamped in a grove of wild palm-trees, so near the sea that the waves almost reached the door of my tent. When the moon rose I walked for an hour along the shore, and, musing upon the new scenes which every day was presenting me, picked up some shells and bits of coral as memorials of the place. I am no star-gazer, but I had learned to look up at the stars; and though I knew most of them merely by sight, I felt an attraction towards them as faces I had seen at home; while the Great Bear with his pointers, and the North Star, seemed my particular friends.

Returning to my tent, I found my Bedouins, with some strangers from the tents which we had passed, sitting round a fire of the branches of palm-trees, smoking, and telling stories as extra-

vagant as any in the Arabian Nights' Entertainments. I sat down with them a few moments, then entered my tent and lay down on my mat on the very shore of the sea, and was lulled to sleep by the gentle murmur of its waters.

In the morning Paul told me that there was a strange Arab outside, who wanted to see me. When we first came down from the mountain on the preceding day, a Bedouin had come out and requested me to turn aside and visit a sick man in his tent. In their perfect ignorance of the healing art, the Arabs believe every stranger to be a hakim; and so great is their confidence in the virtue of medicine, and so great their indifference to the hands from which they receive it, that the path of the traveller is constantly beset with applications from the sick or their friends. I had been so often besought and entreated to cure blindness, deafness, and other maladies beyond even the reach of medical skill, that now I paid little attention to such applications; and when this last request was made, after inquiring into the symptoms of the case, I told the messenger that I could do the sick man no good, and passed on. This morning Paul told me that the patient himself had come over during the night, and was then at the door, begging me to cure him. Paul had told him of my utter inability, but he would not be satisfied; and, when I went out of my tent, he was sitting directly before the door, a thin, ghastly figure; and opening his mouth and attempting an inarticulate jabber, there fell out a

tongue so festered to the very throat, that the sight of it made me sick. I told him that it was utterly out of my power to help him ; that I knew no more of the healing art than he did himself ; and that the only advice I could give him was to endeavour to get to Cairo and put himself under the hands of a physician. I shall never forget the poor fellow's look, and almost blamed myself for not giving him some simple preparation, which might have cheated him, at least for a few days, with the hope that he might escape the tomb to which he was hurrying. His hands fell lifeless by his side, as if he had heard a sentence of death ; he gave me a look which seemed to say that it was all my fault, and fell senseless on the ground. His two companions lifted him up ; his faithful dromedary kneeled to receive him ; and, as he turned away, he cast a reproachful glance towards me, which made me almost imagine myself guilty of his death. I have no doubt that, long before this, the poor Arab is dead, and that in his dying moments, when struggling with the king of terrors, he has seen, in his distracted visions, the figure of the hard-hearted stranger, who, as he thought, might have saved him, but would not.

Anxious to escape an object so painful to my feelings, I walked on, and was soon busily engaged in picking up shells and coral : of the former I never saw so many as at this place. Some were particularly beautiful, but exceedingly delicate, and difficult to be carried. The first

day I could have loaded a camel with them. The coral, too, such as it was, lay scattered about in lavish profusion. I remember, the first piece Paul found, he rubbed his hands like the toiling and untiring alchymist, when he thinks he has discovered the philosopher's stone ; but when he came to a second he threw away the first, in the same spirit in which the Irishman, on his arrival in our country, the El Dorado of his dreams, threw down a sixpence which he had picked up in the street, assuring himself that there was more where that came from. Some of this coral was exceedingly beautiful ; we did not know its value, but I did not think very highly of it, merely from the circumstance of its lying there in such abundance. It was not the rock or branch coral, but a light, porous substance, resembling very much the honeycomb. Paul gathered a large quantity of it, and contrived to carry it to Jerusalem, though it got very much broken on the way. He had the satisfaction of knowing, however, that he had not sustained any great loss ; for, on our first visit to the church of the Holy Sepulchre, we found in the porch a green-turbaned Mussulman, who, returning from his pilgrimage to Mecca, had thought to indemnify himself for the expense and fatigue of his long and dreary journey with this treasure of the sea. Paul took up a large piece, and asked him the price ; when the Mussulman, with an air as dejected in telling as was that of Paul in hearing it, told him two paras,—a para being about one-eighth of a cent : and the next

day I saw before the door of the convent at which we were staying a large heap of the coral which Paul had been so careful in carrying ; and after that he talked only of his shells, the value of which was not yet ascertained.

At about twelve o'clock, close by the shore, we came to a stunted wild palm-tree, with a small stone fence around it ; and, looking down from my dromedary, I saw extended on the ground the figure of an Arab. I at first thought he was dead ; but at the noise of our approach he raised his head from a stone which served him as a pillow, and the first greeting he gave us was to ask for bread. Among all the habitations of hermits I had yet seen, in caves, among rocks or mountains, there was none which could be compared with this by the shore of the sea ; a small fence, but little higher than his recumbent body, protected him from the wind ; the withered branches of the palm-tree were his only covering ; his pillow a stone, and the bare earth his bed ; and when he crawled out and stood before us, erect as age and infirmity would allow, I thought I had never seen such a miserable figure. I could not have believed, without seeing it, that anything so wretched, made in God's image, existed on the earth. He was more than sixty ; his face was dried, and seamed with the deep wrinkles of age and exposure ; his beard long and white ; and his body thin to emaciation. Over his shoulders and breast was a miserable covering of rags, but the rest of his body was perfectly naked ; his skin

was dry, horny, and covered with blotches resembling large scales, which, on his legs, and particularly over his knees, stood out like the greaves of an ancient coat of mail; and he looked like one who literally crawled on his belly, and licked the dust of the earth. He reminded me of the wild hermit of Engaddi, who came out upon the Saracen emir when he journeyed with the Knight of the Leopard on the shore of the Dead Sea. And this man was a saint, and my Arabs looked on him with respect and reverence; and when he died a public tomb would be erected over him, and they upon whose charity he now lived would resort to it as a shrine of prayer. We gave him some bread, and left him in his solitary den; and, before we had got out of sight, he had crawled back under his palm-leaves, and was again resting upon his pillow of stone. In our busy and stirring world, we cannot imagine the possibility of existing in such a dronish state; but, in all probability, that man would lie there till the bread we gave him was exhausted, and, when he had taken his last morsel, again lie down in hope that more would come.

About an hour afterward we came upon a fisherman stealing along the shore with his net in his hand, looking into the sea, and ready to throw it when he saw any fish. The process, like everything else that one sees here, is perfectly primitive, and carries the beholder back to the early days of this ancient country. Carrying the net on his left arm crooked, cleared, and prepared for a throw,

with the one end in his right hand, and taking advantage of ripples made by the wind, and the sun throwing his shadow behind him, he runs along the shore until he sees a shoal of fish, when, with a gentle jerk, and without any noise, he throws his net, which opens and spreads as it falls, so that a little thing which could be put easily into a hat, expands sufficiently to cover a surface of twenty or thirty feet. While running along with us he threw several times; and, as he managed his craft with skill, never throwing until he saw something, he was always successful. I could not make anything out of the Arabic name of the fish; but I have the flavour of them still on my tongue,—a flavour at the moment finer than that of the sole or turbot of Paris, or the trout of Long Island.

In the afternoon the weather changed. Since we first struck the sea, our road along its shore had been one of uncommon beauty, and my time passed very pleasantly, sometimes allowing my dromedary to cool his feet in the clear water, sometimes dismounting to pick up a shell, and all the time having a warm sun and a refreshing breeze; but it was my fortune to see this ancient country under every hue of the changing elements. The sun was now obscured; a strong wind came down the sea directly in our teeth; the head of the gulf was cut off from our view; the sea was troubled, and the white caps were dancing on its surface; the dark mountains looked darker and more lonely; while before us a rainbow was form-

ing over the point of Akaba, which threw itself across the gulf to the east, marking in the firmament, with its rich and varied colours, the figure of the crescent. Soon after we were in the midst of a perfect hurricane. Several times during the day I had wished to float upon the bosom of the tranquil sea, and had looked in vain for some boat or fisherman's skiff to carry me up the gulf; but I now shrank from the angry face of the deep, and, under the shelter of an impending rock, listened to the fierce whistling of the wind and the crashing of the thunder among the mountains.

In the morning the storm was over, and the atmosphere pure, clear, and refreshing as before; but, as a set-off to the pleasure of returning sunshine, Toualeb told me that we had passed the boundaries of the friendly tribes, and that we must look to our weapons, for we were now among strangers, and perhaps enemies. Here, too, for the first time, I put on my Turkish dress, being that of a merchant of Cairo, with the addition of pistols and sabre; but, fearful of taking cold, I cut down an old coat and tied up a pair of pantaloons, so as to have a complete suit under the large white trousers and red silk gown which formed the principal items of my dress. The red tarbouch I had worn ever since I had been in Egypt; but I now rolled round it a green and yellow striped handkerchief, to which Toualeb gave the proper twist; and, with my yellow slippers and red shoes over them, sash, pistols, sword, and long beard, I received the congratula-

tions and compliments of my friends upon my improved appearance.

Indeed, I played the Turk well. Different from my notions of the appearance of the Turk, they have generally light and florid complexions ; and, if I could have talked their language, dressed as a Turk, they could not have judged from my appearance that I had ever been outside the walls of old Stamboul. There is no exaggeration in the unanimous reports of travellers of the effect which the costumes of the East give to personal appearance ; and, having seen and known it even in my own person, I am inclined to believe that there is fallacy in the equally prevalent opinion of the personal beauty of the Turks. Their dress completely hides all deformity of person, and the variety of colours, the arms and the long beard, divert the attention of the observer from a close examination of features. The striking effect of costume is strongly perceptible in the soldiers of the Sultan, and the mongrel, half-European uniform in which he has put them, and in which they are not by any means an uncommonly fine-looking set of men. These soldiers are taken wherever they are caught, and, consequently, are a fair specimen of the Turkish race ; and any English regiment will turn out finer men than the best in the Sultan's army. Following my example, Paul also slipped into his Bedouin shirt, and could hardly be distinguished from the best Arab of them all.

Again our road lay along the shore, so near

that sometimes we had to dismount and pick our way over the rocks, and at others our dromedaries bathed their feet in the water. In one place the side of the mountain rose so directly and abruptly from the water's edge, that we had to turn aside and pass around it, coming again to the shore after about an hour's ride. Here we saw the gulf narrowing towards its extremity ; and on the opposite side a cluster of palm-trees, within which, and completely hidden from view, was the end of our first stage, the fortress of Akaba. Never was the sight of one of the dearest objects on earth, home to the wanderer, land to the sailor, or a mistress to the lover, more welcome than the sight of those palm-trees to me. The malady under which I had been labouring had grown upon me every day ; and, in spite of all that was rich and interesting, time after time I had regretted my rashness in throwing myself so far into the desert. The repose, therefore, which awaited me at Akaba seemed the most precious thing on earth.

Towards evening we could see Akaba more distinctly, though still on the opposite side of the gulf, and still at a formidable distance to me. A brisk trot would have carried me there in an hour ; but this was more than I could bear, supported as I was by a mattress on each side of me, and barely able to sustain the slow and measured movement of a walk. Night was again coming on, and heavy clouds were gathering in the east. I was extremely anxious to sleep within

the fortress that night ; and, fearful that a stranger would not be admitted after dark, I sent Paul on ahead with my compliments to the governor, and the modest request that he would keep the gates open till I came.

A governor is a governor all the world over. Honour and respect attend him wherever he may be ; whether the almost regal governor-general of India, the untitled chief magistrate of our own democratic state, or the governor of a little fortress on the shores of the Red Sea. But there are some governors one may take a liberty with, and others not ; and of the former class was my friend of Akaba. His name was Suliman, his title aga, and therefore he was called Suliman Aga. He had his appointment by favour of the Pacha, and permission to retain it by favour of the Bedouins around ; he had under him nominally a garrison of Mogrebbin soldiers, but they were as restive as some of our own unbroken militia ; and, like many a worthy disciplinarian among us, he could do just as he pleased with them if he only let them have their own way. He was, in short, an excellent governor, and I gave him two dollars and a recommendation at parting.

But I am going too fast. I arrived before dark, and in such a state that I almost fell from my dromedary in dismounting at the gate of the fortress. The first glance told me that this was not the place of rest I had promised myself. Half a dozen Mogrebbins from the shores of Morocco, the most tried and faithful of the hired

troops of the Pacha, were sitting on a mat within the gate, smoking their long pipes, with their long guns, swords, and pistols hanging above their heads. They rose and gave me a seat beside them, and the whole of the little population of the fortress, and the Bedouins living under the palm-trees outside, gathered around to gaze at the stranger. The great caravan of pilgrims for Mecca had left them only three days before; and, except upon the passing and return of the caravan, years pass by without a stranger ever appearing at the fortress. They had heard of my coming, for the sheik had waited two days after the departure of the caravan, and had only gone that morning, leaving directions with the governor to send for him as soon as I arrived. I was somewhat surprised at his confidence in my coming, for, when I saw him, I was very far from being decided; but in the miserable condition in which I found myself, I hailed it as a favourable omen. The governor soon came, and was profuse in his offers of service, beginning, of course, with coffee and a pipe, which I was forced to decline, apologizing on the ground of my extreme indisposition, and begged to be conducted to a room by myself. The governor rose and conducted me, and every Bedouin present followed after; and when I came to the room by *myself*, I had at least forty of them around me. Once Paul prevailed on some of them to go out; but they soon came back again, and I was too ill to urge the matter.

The very aspect of the room into which I was shown prostrated the last remains of my physical strength. It was eighty or a hundred feet long, forty feet wide, and about as many high, having on one side a dead wall, being that of the fortress, and on the other two large windows without shutters and the door; the naked floor was of mud, and so were the walls and ceiling. I looked for one spot less cheerless than the rest; and finding at the upper end a place where the floor was elevated about a foot, with a feeling of despondency I have seldom known, I stretched my mattress in the extreme corner, and, too far gone to have any regard to the presence of the governor or his Arab soldiers, threw myself at full length upon it. I was sick in body and soul; for besides the actual and prostrating debility under which I was labouring, I had before me the horrible certainty that I was completely cut off from all medical aid, and from all the comforts which a sick man wants. I was ten days from Cairo; to go there in person was impossible; and, if I should send, I could not obtain the aid of a physician in less than twenty-five or thirty days, if at all; and before that I might be past his help. When I left Cairo Dr. Walne had set me up, so that I held out tolerably well until I reached Mount Sinai; and, moreover, had given me sundry medicines, with directions for their use under particular circumstances; but my symptoms had so completely changed, that the directions, if not the medicines themselves, were en-

tirely useless. In a spirit of desperation, however, I took them out ; and, not knowing where to begin, resolved to go through the whole catalogue in such order as chance might direct. I began with a double dose of cathartic powders ; and, while lying on my mat, I was diverted from the misery of my own gloomy reflections by the pious conversation of the Mussulman governor. If God willed, he said, I would soon get well ; himself and his wife had been ill three months, and had no physician, but God willed that they should recover, and they did ; and as I looked in his believing face and those of the Bedouins, I found myself gradually falling into the fatalism of their creed. I shall never forget the manner in which I passed that night, and the sombre fancies that chased each other through my brain. A single lamp threw a dim and feeble light through the large apartment, scarcely revealing the dusky forms of the sleeping Bedouins, with their weapons by their sides, and I was the only one awake. Busy memory called up all the considerations that ought to have prevented my taking such a journey, and the warning voice of my friend at Cairo, “ turn your steps westward,” again rang in my ears. I saw the figure of the dead Tartar at Suez, like me, a wanderer from home, and buried by strangers in the sandy desert ; and so nervous and desponding had I become, that the words of the prophet in regard to the land of Idumea, “ none shall pass through it for ever and ever,” struck upon my heart like a

funeral knell. I was now upon the borders of Edom ; and, in the despondency of sickness I looked upon myself as rash and impious in undertaking what might be considered a defiance of the prophetic denunciations inspired by God himself.

In the morning I was worse ; and, following up my almost desperate plan of treatment, commenced the day with a double emetic. The governor came in ; and though I tried to keep the door shut, another and another followed, till my room was as public as any part of the fortress : indeed it was by far the most public, for all the rest was stripped of its bronzed figures to ornament my room. Annoyed to death by seeing twenty or thirty pairs of fiery black eyes constantly fixed upon me, I remembered, with feelings of envy, my tent in the Desert, — there I could at least be alone ; and I resolved, at all hazards, not to pass another night in the fortress.

In the midst of my exceeding perplexities, the sheik of Akaba, my friend of Cairo, made his appearance. I was in a pitiable condition when he entered, under the immediate operation of my emetic, with the whole of the Mogrebbin guard, and every beggarly Bedouin about the fortress, staring at me. He looked surprised and startled when he saw me ; but with a glimmering of good sense, though, as I thought, with unnecessary harshness, told me that I would die if I stayed there, and that he was ready to set out with me at a moment's notice. By the advice of Mr. Gliddon, my plan had been to make this my place of

negotiation and arrangement, and not to proceed farther without having all things definitely explained and settled ; but I was in no condition to negotiate, and was ready to do anything to get away from the fortress. He was exceedingly anxious to start immediately, and gave me a piece of information that almost lifted me from the ground ; namely, that he could provide me with a horse of the best blood of Arabia for the whole of the journey. He could not have given me more grateful intelligence, for the bare idea of again mounting my dromedary deprived me of all energy and strength. I had endeavoured to procure a sort of palanquin, to be swung between two camels ; but so destitute was the fortress of all kinds of material, that it was impossible to make it. When he spoke to me then of a horse, it made me a new man ; and, without a moment's hesitation, I told him that if he would give me till five o'clock in the afternoon, I would be ready to set out with him. One thing I did not like. I wished and designed to take with me my faithful Toualeb ; but he had told me that he did not believe that the El Alouins would allow it ; and, when he spoke to the sheik, the latter had positively refused, pretending that all was arranged between us at Cairo. I was fain, therefore, to abandon the idea, not having energy to insist upon anything that was disputed, and to trust everything to fortune and the sheik. I told Paul to do all that was necessary ; and, begging to be left alone for a few hours, I laid myself down upon my mat,

and, worn out with the watching of the last night, and the excitement of thinking and deciding on my future movements, quickly fell asleep.

At five o'clock the sheik returned, punctual to his appointment. I had slept soundly, and awoke somewhat refreshed. The room was again filled with the Bedouins, and I was as ready to go as he was to take me. He had ordered what was necessary upon the journey for man and beast, and provisions for six camels and ten men for ten days. I gave Paul my purse, and told him to pay, and, walking to the gate of the fortress, a dozen Arabs helped me to my saddle. They would have taken me up in their arms and carried me; and, when I had mounted, they would have taken up the horse and carried him too, so great a friendship had they already conceived for me. But the friendship was not for what I was, but for what I had. They had welcomed me as they would have welcomed a bag of gold; and I had scarcely mounted before they all, governor, Mogrebbin soldiers, and Bedouins, began to clamour for bucksheesh. Ten years before, M. Laborde had passed along this route, and stopped at the fortress while waiting for the sheik who was to guide and protect him to Petra; and having in view the purpose of preparing the great work which has since given him such merited reputation, he had scattered money and presents with a most liberal hand. M. Laborde himself was not personally known to any of those now at the fortress; but his companion, M. Linant, of whom

I have before spoken, was known to them all; and they all had heard of the gold shower in which M. Laborde had appeared among them. They therefore expected the same from me; and when Paul had got through his distribution, I was startled at perceiving the dissatisfied air with which they received a bucksheesh that would have overwhelmed any other Arabs with joy and gratitude.

But I must not hurry the reader from Akaba with the same eagerness which I displayed in leaving it. This little fortress is seldom visited by travellers, and it is worth a brief description. It stands at the extremity of the eastern or Elanitic branch of the Red Sea, at the foot of the sandstone mountains, near the shore, and almost buried in a grove of palm-trees, the only living things in that region of barren sands. It is the last stopping-place of the caravan of pilgrims on its way to Mecca, being yet thirty days' journey from the tomb of the Prophet, and, of course, the first at which they touch on their return. Except at the time of these two visits, the place is desolate from the beginning of the year to its close; the arrival of a traveller is of exceedingly rare occurrence, and seldom does even the wandering Bedouin stop within its walls; no ship rides in its harbour, and not even a solitary fishing-boat breaks the stillness of the water at its feet. But it was not always so desolate, for this was the Ezion-geber of the Bible, where three thousand years ago King Solomon made a navy of ships,

which brought from Ophir gold and precious stones for the great temple at Jerusalem ; and again, at a later day, a great city existed here, through which, at this distant point in the wilderness, the wealth of India was conveyed to imperial Rome. But all these are gone, and there are no relics or monuments to tell of former greatness ; like the ships which once floated in the harbour, all have passed away. Still, ruined and desolate as it is, to the eye of feeling, the little fortress is not without its interest, for, as the governor told me, it was built by the heroic Saladin.

I had taken leave of my trusty Toualeb, and was again in the hands of strangers ; and I do not deceive myself when I say, that on the very borders of Edom I noticed a change for the worse in the appearance of the Bedouins. According to the reports of travellers and writers, those with whom I now set out from Akaba belonged to one of the most lawless tribes of a lawless race ; and they were by far the wildest and fiercest-looking of all I had yet seen ; with complexions bronzed and burnt to blackness ; dark eyes, glowing with a fire approaching to ferocity ; figures thin and shrunken, though sinewy ; chests standing out, and ribs projecting from the skin, like those of a skeleton. The sheik, like myself, was on horseback, dressed in a red silk gown like my own, and over it a large cloak of scarlet cloth, both the gifts of Messieurs Linant and Laborde ; a red tarbouch with a shawl rolled round it, long red boots, and a sash ; and carried pistols, a sword, and a spear

about twelve feet long, pointed with steel at both ends ; his brother, too, wore a silk gown, and carried pistols and sword, and the rest were armed with swords and matchlock guns, and wore the common Bedouin dress ; some of them almost no dress at all. We had moved some distance from the fortress without a word being uttered, for they neither spoke to me nor with each other. I was in no humour for talking myself, but it was unpleasant to have more than a dozen men around, all bending their keen eyes upon me, and not one of them uttering a word. With a view to making some approach to acquaintance, and removing their jealousy of me as a stranger, I asked some casual question about the road ; but I might better have held my peace, for it seemed that I could not well have hit upon a subject more displeasing. My amiable companions looked as black as midnight, and one of them, a particularly swarthy and truculent-looking fellow, turned short round, and told me that I had too much curiosity, and that he did not understand what right a Christian had to come there and hunt up their villages, take down their names, &c. But the sheik came in as mediator, and told them that I was a good man ; that he had been to my house in Cairo, and that I was no spy ; and so this cloud passed off. I did not mean to go far that afternoon, for I had left the fortress merely to get rid of the crowd, and return to fresh air and quiet : and in less than an hour I again pitched my tent in the desert. Finding plenty of brush, we kindled a large fire, and

all sat down around it. It was a great object with me to establish myself on a good footing with my companions at the outset ; and, more fortunate, on my second attempt, before one round of coffee and pipes was over, the sheik turned to me, and, with all the extravagance of Eastern hyperbole, said he thanked God for having permitted us again to see each other's face, and that I had been recovering since I saw his face ; and, turning his eyes to heaven, with an expression of deep and confiding piety, he added, " God grant that you may soon become a strong man ! " and then the others all took their pipes from their mouths, and, turning up their eyes to heaven, the whole band of breechless desperadoes added, " Wullah, Wullah ! "—" God grant it ! "

CHAPTER III.

Prophecy and Fulfilment. — Unpleasant Suggestions. — The Denounced Land. — Management. — A Rencounter. — An Arab's Cunning. — The Camel's Hump. — Adventure with a Lamb. — Mount Hor. — Delicate Negotiations. — Approach to Petra.

I HAD now crossed the borders of Edom. Standing near the shore of the Elanitic branch of the Red Sea, the doomed and accursed land lay stretched out before me, the theatre of awful visitations and their more awful fulfilment; given to Esau as being of the fatness of the earth, but now a barren waste, a picture of death, an eternal monument of the wrath of an offended God, and a fearful witness to the truth of the words spoken by his prophets. "For my sword shall be bathed in heaven: behold, it shall come down upon Idumea, and upon the people of my curse to judgment."... "From generation to generation it shall lie waste; none shall pass through it for ever and ever. But the cormorant and the bittern shall possess it; the owl also and the raven shall dwell in it; and he shall stretch out upon it the line of confusion and the stones of emptiness. They shall call the nobles thereof to the kingdom, but none shall be there, and all her princes shall be nothing. And thorns shall come up in her palaces, nettles and brambles in the fortresses there-

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of : and it shall be an habitation of dragons, and a court for owls. The wild beasts of the desert shall also meet with the wild beasts of the island, and the satyr shall cry to his fellow : the screech-owl also shall rest there, and find for herself a place of rest. There shall the great owl make her nest, and lay, and hatch, and gather under her shadow : there shall the vultures also be gathered, every one with her mate. Seek ye out of the book of the Lord, and read : no one of these shall fail, none shall want her mate : for my mouth it hath commanded, and his spirit it hath gathered them. And he hath cast the lot for them, and his hand hath divided it unto them by line : they shall possess it for ever ; from generation to generation shall they dwell therein.”*

I read in the sacred book prophecy upon prophecy and curse upon curse against the very land on which I stood. I was about to journey through this land, and to see with my own eyes whether the Almighty had stayed his uplifted arm, or whether his sword had indeed come down “ upon Idumea, and the people of his curse, to judgment.” I have before referred to Keith on the Prophecies, where, in illustrating the fulfilment of the prophecies against Idumea, “ none shall pass through it for ever and ever,” after referring to the singular fact that the great caravan routes existing in the days of David and Solomon, and under the Roman Empire, are now completely broken up, and that the great hadji routes to

Mecca from Damascus and Cairo lie along the borders of Idumea, barely touching and not passing through it, he proves by abundant references that to this day no traveller has ever passed through the land.

The Bedouins who roam over the land of Idumea have been described by travellers as the worst of their race. "The Arabs about Akaba," says Pococke, "are a very bad people and notorious robbers, and are at war with all others." Mr. Jolliffe alludes to it as one of the wildest and most dangerous divisions of Arabia; and Burckhardt says, "that this was the first time he had ever felt fear during his travels in the desert, and his route was the most dangerous he had ever travelled," that he had "nothing with him that could attract the notice or excite the cupidity of the Bedouins," and was "even stripped of some rags that covered his wounded ankles." Messrs. Legh and Banks, and Captains Irby and Mangles, were told that the Arabs of Wady Moussa, the tribe that formed my escort, "were a most savage and treacherous race, and that they would use their Frank's blood for a medicine;" and they learned on the spot that "upward of thirty pilgrims from Barbary had been murdered at Petra the preceding year by the men of Wady Moussa;" and they speak of the opposition and obstruction from the Bedouins as resembling the case of the Israelites under Moses, when Edom refused to give them passage through his country. None of these had passed through it, and unless the two Englishmen

and Italian before referred to succeeded in their attempt, when I pitched my tent on the borders of Edom no traveller had ever done so. The ignorance and mystery that hung over it added to the interest with which I looked to the land of barrenness and desolation stretched out before me; and I would have regarded all the difficulties and dangers of the road merely as materials for a not unpleasant excitement, if I had only felt a confidence in my physical strength to carry me through. But some idea may be formed of my unhappy condition from the circumstance that, in the evening, my servant, an honest and faithful fellow, who, I believe, was sincerely attached to me, while I was lying on my mat, with many apologies, and hoping I would not think hard of him, and praying that no accident might happen to me, told me that he was a poor man, and it would be very hard for him to lose his earnings, and that an English traveller had died in Syria the year before, and his consul had taken possession of his effects, and to this day his poor servant had never received his wages. I at first thought it unkind of him to come upon me at that moment with such a suggestion; but I soon changed my mind. I had not paid him a cent since he had been with me, and his earnings were no trifle to him; and, after all, what was I to him except a debtor? In any event I should leave him in a few months, and, in all probability, should never see him again. I told him that he knew the circumstances under which we had left Cairo; that

I had brought with me barely enough to pay my expenses on the road ; nor could I give him what he wanted, an order upon my consul at Beyrout ; but, after he had gone out, with somewhat the same feelings that may be supposed to possess a man in extremis writing his own will, I wrote an order, including a gratuity, which he richly deserved, upon a merchant in Beyrout, upon whom I had a letter of credit ; but the cheerlessness and helplessness of my situation never struck me so forcibly as when I reflected that, in the uncertain position in which I was placed, it was not prudent to give it into his hands. At that moment I mistrusted everybody ; and, though I had not then, nor at any subsequent time, the slightest reason to doubt his faith, I did not dare to let him know that he could in any event be a gainer by my death. I considered it necessary to make him suppose that his interest was identified with my safety, and therefore folded up the paper, enclosed it in the letter of credit directed to the merchant, and put it back in my trunk ; and I need not say that it was a great satisfaction to me that the validity of the draft was never tested.

When I awoke in the morning, the first thing I thought of was my horse. It almost made me well to think of him, and it was not long before I was on his back.

Standing near the shore of this northern extremity of the Red Sea, I saw before me an immense sandy valley, which, without the aid of geological science, to the eye of common observation and

reason, had once been the bottom of a sea or the bed of a river. This dreary valley, extending far beyond the reach of the eye, had been partly explored by Burckhardt; sufficiently to ascertain and mention it in the latest geography of the country, as the great valley of El Ghor, extending from the shores of the Elanitic gulf to the southern extremity of the Lake Asphaltites or the Dead Sea; and it was manifest, by landmarks of Nature's own providing, that over that sandy plain those seas had once mingled their waters, or, perhaps more probably, that before the cities of the plain had been consumed by brimstone and fire, and Sodom and Gomorrah covered by a pestilential lake, the Jordan had here rolled its waters. The valley varied from four to eight miles in breadth, and on each side were high, dark, and barren mountains, bounding it like a wall. On the left were the mountains of Judea, and on the right those of Seir, the portion given to Esau as an inheritance; and among them, buried from the eyes of strangers, the approach to it known only to the wandering Bedouins, was the ancient capital of his kingdom, the excavated city of Petra, the cursed and blighted Edom of the Edomites. The land of Idumea lay before me, in barrenness and desolation; no trees grew in the valley, and no verdure on the mountain-tops. All was bare, dreary, and desolate.

But the beauty of the weather atoned for this barrenness of scene; and, mounted on the back of my Arabian, I felt a lightness of frame and an

elasticity of spirit that I could not have believed possible in my actual state of health. Patting the neck of the noble animal, I talked with the sheik about his horse; and, by warm and honest praises, was rapidly gaining upon the affections of my wild companions. The sheik told me that the race of these horses had been in his family more than four hundred years, though I am inclined to think, from his not being able to tell his own age, that he did not precisely know the pedigree of his beasts. If anything connected with my journey in the East could throw me into ecstasies, it would be the recollection of that horse. I felt lifted up when on his back, and snuffed the pure air of the desert with a zest not unworthy of a Bedouin. Like all the Arabian horses, he was broken only to the walk and gallop, the unnatural and ungraceful movement of a trot being deemed unworthy the free limbs of an Arab courser.

The sheik to-day was more communicative. Indeed, he became very fond of talking; suspicious as I was, and on the watch for anything that might rouse my apprehensions, I observed that he regularly settled down upon the same topics, namely, the dangers of the road, the bad character of the Arabs, his great friendship for me the first moment he saw me, and his determination to protect me with his life against all dangers. This was well enough for once or twice, but he repeated it too often, and overshot the mark, as I did when I first began to recom-

mend myself to them. I suspected him of exaggerating the dangers of the road to enhance the value of his services; and, lest I should entertain any doubt upon the subject, he betrayed himself by always winding up with a reference to the generosity of Monsieur Linant. The consequence was, that, instead of inspiring me with fear, he gave me confidence; and, by the end of my first day's journey, I had lost nearly all apprehensions of the dangers of the road, and acquired some distrust and contempt for my protector. We were all getting along very well, however. Paul had been playing a great game among the men, and, by his superior knowledge of mankind, easily circumvented these ignorant Bedouins; and his Arabic name of "Osman" was constantly in some one's mouth. I forgot to mention that, very early in my journey in the desert, my companions, unable to twist my name to suit their Arabic intonations, had called me Abdil Hasis (literally, the slave of the good God), and Paul, Osman.

In the evening, while making a note in a little memorandum-book, and on the point of lying down to sleep, I heard a deep guttural voice at some distance outside, and approaching nearer, till the harsh sounds grated as if spoken in my very ears. My Bedouins were sitting around a large fire at the door of the tent, and through the flames I saw coming up two wild and ferocious-looking Arabs, their dark visages reddened by the blaze, and their keen eyes flashing; and hardly had they reached my men, before all drew

their swords, and began cutting away at each other with all their might. I did not feel much apprehension, and could not but admire the boldness of the fellows, two men walking up deliberately and drawing upon ten. One of the first charges Toualeb gave me on my entrance into the desert was, if the Arabs composing my escort got into any quarrel, to keep out of the way and let them fight it out by themselves; and, in pursuance of this advice, without making any attempt to interfere, I stood in the door watching the progress of the fray. The larger of the two was engaged with the sheik's brother, and their swords were clashing in a way that would soon have put an end to one of them, when the sheik, who had been absent at the moment, sprang in among them, and knocking up their swords with his long spear, while his scarlet cloak fell from his shoulders, his dark face reddened, and his black eyes glowed in the firelight, with a voice that drowned the clatter of the weapons, roared out a volley of Arabic gutturals which made them drop their points, and apparently silenced them with shame. What he said we did not know; but the result was a general cessation of hostilities. The sheik's brother had received a cut in the arm, and his adversary helped to bind up the wound, and they all sat down together round the fire to pipes and coffee, as good friends as a party of Irishmen with their heads broken after a Donnybrook fairing. I had noticed, in this flurry, the exceeding awkwardness with which they used

their swords, by their overhand blows constantly laying themselves open, so that any little Frenchman with his toothpick of a rapier would have run them through before they could have cried quarter. After the thing was all over, Paul went out and asked the cause; but the sheik told him that it was an affair of their own, and with this satisfactory answer we were obliged to rest content.

Though all was now quiet, the elements of discord were still existing. The new-comer was a ferocious fellow; his voice was constantly heard, like the hoarse croaking of some bird of evil omen, and sometimes it was raised to the pitch of high and deadly passion. Paul heard him ask if I was a European, to which the sheik answered no; I was a Turk. He then got upon the railroad to Suez, and the poor benighted Bedouin, completely behind the age in the march of improvement, having never read Say's Political Economy or Smith's Wealth of Nations, denounced it as an invasion of the natural rights of the people, and a wicked breaking up of the business of the camel-drivers. He cursed every European that ever set foot in their country; and, speaking of Mr. Galloway, the engineer of the proposed railroad, hoped that he might some day meet him, and swore he would strangle him with his own hands.

In the morning we were again under way. Our quarrelsome friend of the night before was by our side, perched on the bare back of a dromedary,

and, if possible, looking more grim and savage by daylight. His companion was mounted behind him, and he kept near the sheik, occasionally crossing my path, looking back at me, and croaking in the sheik's ears as he had done the night before. Two or three times he crossed my path, as if with the intention of going into the mountains; and then, as if he found it impossible to tear himself away, returned to the sheik. At length he did go, and with a most discontented and disconsolate air; and after he had gone, the sheik told us that, when they came up to the fire, they demanded tribute or bucksheesh from the stranger passing over the Bedouins' highway; that his brother had refused to pay it, which had been the cause of the quarrel; and that, when he himself came up, he had told the demanders of tribute that he had undertaken to protect me from injury through the desert; that he had given his head to Mohammed Aly for my safety, and would defend me with his life against every danger; but that, finally, he had pacified them by giving them a couple of dollars apiece. I did not believe this. They looked too disconsolate when they went away; for the four dollars would have made the hearts of two beggarly Bedouins leap for joy; and I could not help asking him, if we were obliged to buy our peace when only two came upon us, what we should do when a hundred should come; to which he answered that they must all be paid, and that it was impossible to pass through the desert without it.

We got through the day remarkably well, the scene being always precisely the same; before us, the long, desolate, sandy valley, and on each side the still more desolate and dreary mountains. Towards evening we encamped; and, after sitting some time around a fire with my companions, I entered my tent. Soon after, the sheik, in pursuance of his pitiful plan of exciting my fears and raising his own value, sent in for my gun and pistols, telling me that there were Arabs near; that he heard the barking of a dog, and intended to keep watch all night. I had already seen so much of him, that I knew this was a mere piece of braggadocio; and I met it with another, by telling him that no man could use my pistols better than myself, and that all he had to do was, upon the first alarm, to give me notice, and I would be among them. About an hour afterward I went out and found them all asleep; and I could not help making Paul rouse the sheik, and ask him if he did not want the pistols for his vigilant watch.

In the morning we started at half-past six. The day was again beautiful and inspiring; my horse and myself had become the best friends in the world: and though I was disgusted with the sheik's general conduct, I moved quietly along the valley, conversing with him or Paul, or with any of the men, about anything that happened to suggest itself. I remember I had a long discourse about the difference between the camel and the dromedary. Buffon gives the camel two

humps, and the dromedary one ; and this, I believe, is the received opinion, as it had always been mine ; but, since I had been in the East, I had remarked that it was exceedingly rare to meet a camel with two humps. I had seen together at one time, on the starting of the caravan of pilgrims to Mecca, perhaps twenty thousand camels and dromedaries, and had not seen among them more than half a dozen with two humps. Not satisfied with any explanation from European residents or travellers, I had inquired among the Bedouins ; and Toualeb, my old guide, brought up among camels, had given such a strange account that I never paid any regard to it. Now, however, the sheik told me the same thing, namely, that they were of different races, the dromedary being to the camel as the blood-horse is to the cart-horse ; and that the two humps were peculiar neither to the dromedary nor the camel, or natural to either ; but that both are always born with only one hump, which, being a mere mass of flesh, and very tender, almost as soon as the young camel is born a piece is sometimes cut out of the middle for the convenience of better arranging the saddle ; and, being cut out of the centre, a hump is left on either side of the cavity ; and this, according to the account given by Toualeb, is the only way in which two humps ever appear on the back of a camel or dromedary. I should not mention this story if I had heard it only once ; but, precisely as I had it from Toualeb, it was confirmed with a great deal of circumstantial de-

tail by another Bedouin, who, like himself, had lived among camels and dromedaries all his life; and his statement was assented to by all his companions. I do not give this out as a discovery made at this late day in regard to an animal so well known as the camel; indeed, I am told that the Arabs are not ignorant of that elegance of civilized life called "quizzing;" I give it merely to show how I whiled away my time in the desert, and for what it is worth.

Towards midday the sheik dashed across the plain, with his long lance poised in his hand, and his scarlet dress streaming in the wind; and about an hour afterward we came to his spear stuck in the sand, and a little Bedouin boy sitting by it to invite us to his father's tent. We turned aside, and, coming to the tent, found the sheik sitting on the ground refreshing himself with long draughts of goat's milk. He passed the skin to us; but as master of the ceremonies, he declined the regular Arab invitation to stay and eat a lamb. He could not, however, neglect the goods the gods provided, and told our host that we would take a lamb with us for our evening meal. The lamb was caught, and, with his legs tied, was thrown into a sack, where he made music for us for the rest of the day. To the Bedouin, next to the pleasure of eating a lamb is that of knowing he has one to eat; and so the bleating of the doomed innocent was merely a whetter of appetite. After we had gone some distance from the tent, we set down the lamb on the ground, and I

never saw a creature so perfectly the emblem of helplessness. At first he ran back a little way from us ; then stopped ; and apparently feeling the loneliness of his condition, returned and followed us, and in a few moments was under the feet of the camels, a part of our caravan unwittingly moving to the slaughter. The tent was hardly pitched before he lay bleeding on the ground ; and the fire was no sooner kindled than his entrails, liver, &c., were in the burning bush ; and in a few moments the Arabs were greedily devouring the meal into which he had been so speedily converted. The whole scene which I have before described was repeated ; and, as before, in the morning the skin was the only part of the lamb to be seen.

One thing in the sheik was particularly disagreeable. He was constantly talking with Paul about the sacrifice he made in accompanying me ; his confident expectation that I would pay him well for it, and the generosity of M. Linant ; always winding up with asking what bucksheesh I intended to give him. Paul told me all that passed, and it was evident that the sheik and his men were making extravagant calculations. I had estimated with Mr. Gliddon the probable expenses to Jerusalem, founded on the rate of hire for camels which the sheik had named at Cairo ; and as it was not beyond the range of possibilities that I should be stripped on the way, I had brought with me barely enough to cover my probable expenses ; and, consequently, I saw that my

means were very likely to fall short of the sheik's expectations. I did not want any disappointment at the last, and that night I called him to my tent, resolved upon coming to an understanding. I told him that, knowing it was a dangerous road, and that I was subject to the risk of being robbed, I had brought with me a specific sum of money, all of which I intended for him, and that all he scattered along the road would be so much taken from his own pocket in the end. He was evidently startled, and expressed his surprise that a howaga, or gentleman, should have any bottom to his pocket, but promised to economize in future.

The next day the general features of the scene were the same, eternal barrenness and desolation ; and, moving to the right, at one o'clock we were at the foot of the mountains of Seir ; and towering above all the rest, surmounted by a circular dome, like the tombs of the sheiks in Egypt, was the bare and rugged summit of Mount Hor, the burial-place of Aaron, visible in every direction at a great distance from below, and on both sides the great range of mountains, and forming one of the marks by which the Bedouin regulates his wanderings in the desert. Soon after we turned in among the mountains, occasionally passing small spots of verdure, strangely contrasting with the surrounding and general desolation. Towards evening, in a small mountain on our left, we saw an excavation in the rock, which the sheik said had been a fortress ; and, as of every other

work of which the history is unknown, its construction was ascribed to the early Christians. It was a beautiful afternoon; gazelles were playing in the valleys, and partridges running wild up the sides of the mountains, and we pitched our tent partly over a carpet of grass, with the door open to the lofty tomb of the great high-priest of Israel.

In the evening the sheik came to my tent for money, having been very pertinacious on that tender subject all day with Paul, asking him how much he thought I had with me, and how much I intended to give him. He began by asking me for pay for the camels at the price agreed upon in Cairo. If he had asked me before starting from Akaba, I should probably have paid him; but after what I had seen, and what had passed between him and Paul, I did not like his asking for it now: he told me, too, that we were now at the door of Petra, and that it would be necessary to pay a bucksheesh, or tribute, on entering, but he could not tell how much would be required, as that would depend altogether on circumstances. There was always a guard stationed at the entrance of the defile leading to Petra, and the amount to be paid would depend upon the number we might happen to find when we entered. These were never less than thirty or forty; and if there should not be more, the tribute exacted would not be more than thirty or forty dollars; but there might be two or three hundred; and, at all events, I had better give him my purse,

and he would return me what was left. I suspected that, as he could not find out from Paul either how much I had with me or what I intended to give him, this story of the tribute was merely a pretext to levy an immediate contribution. The precise danger I had to fear was, that he would get my money from me piecemeal, and when we came among Bedouins where it would be necessary to buy my peace, go off and leave me to their mercy. I did not want to have any rupture with him, particularly at the moment when I was at the very door of Petra, and might lose all that I had been endeavouring with so much personal difficulty to accomplish, and therefore told him, as to the bucksheesh for entering Petra, that I expected; and when we should arrive there, and learn how much it was, would be ready to pay it; but in the mean time, for any little casual expense that might be incurred, I would give him a purse of five hundred piasters, or twenty-five dollars. Touching the hire of camels, I said that I did not expect to pay it until we should arrive at Hebron; and, hurling back upon him one of his own flourishes, told him that it was distrusting my honour to ask it now. I reminded him of our conversation at Cairo, remarking that I had come into the desert upon the faith of his promise; and he replied very impertinently, if not menacingly, that one word here was worth a hundred at Cairo. I was somewhat roused at this, and, determined not to be dragooned into compliance, forgot for a moment my pru-

dential plan, and told him that I would not be driven into that or anything else; and that sooner than submit to his demand, I would turn back here, at the very door of Petra, and return to Cairo. This had its effect, for he was no more disposed to proceed to extremities than myself; and when I found him giving way a little, I threw in a powerful argument, which I had several times before hinted at, namely, that there were two parties on the Nile who were exceedingly anxious to make the same journey, and who would be governed altogether by the report I should make. I saw that his avarice and hope of future gain were rapidly getting the better of his eagerness to touch his money before it was earned; and without inflicting upon the reader a full account of our long negotiation, made up principally of blustering and exaggeration, with some diplomatic concessions on both sides, it is enough to say that at last, to my great relief, he withdrew his demand and took what I offered.

Before daybreak the next morning we had struck our tent, and sending it and the other baggage by another route,—the sheik being afraid to take with us anything that might tempt the Bedouins, — and leaving behind us several of our men, the sheik, his brother, three Arabs, Paul, and myself, with nothing but what we had on, and provisions for one day, started for Wady Moussa and the city of Petra. Our course was a continued ascent. I have found it throughout difficult to give any description which can impart

to the reader a distinct idea of the wild and desolate scenes presented among these mountainous deserts. I have been, too, in so many of the same general nature, that particular ones do not present themselves to my mind now with the force and distinctness of perfect recollection; and, in the few rough and hurried notes which I made on the spot, I marked rather the effect than the causes which produced it. I remember, however, that the mountains were barren, solitary, and desolate; and that, as we ascended, their aspect became more and more wild and rugged, and rose to grandeur and sublimity. I remember, too, that among these arid wastes of crumbling rock there were beautiful streams gushing out from the sides of the mountains; and sometimes small valleys, where the green grass, and shrubs, and bushes, were putting forth in early spring; and that, altogether, I saw among the stony mountains of Arabia Petræa more verdure than I had observed since I left the banks of the Nile. I remember, moreover, that the ascent was difficult; that our camels toiled laboriously; and that even our sure-footed Arabian horses often slipped upon the steep and rugged path. Once the sheik and myself, being in advance of the rest, sat down upon an eminence which overlooked, on one side, a range of wild and barren mountains, and, on the other, the dreary valley of El Ghor: above us was the venerable summit of Mount Hor; and near us a stone blackened with smoke, and surrounded by fragments of bones, showing the place

where the Arabs had sacrificed sheep to the Prophet Aaron. From this point we wound along the base of Mount Hor, which, from this great height, seemed just beginning to rise into a mountain : and I remember that, in winding slowly along its base, as our companions had objected to our mounting to the tomb of Aaron, Paul and I were narrowly examining its sides for a path, and making arrangements to slip out as soon as they should all be asleep, and ascend by moonlight. Not far from the base of Mount Hor, we came to some tombs cut in the sides of the rocks, and standing at the threshold of the entrance to the excavated city. Before entering this extraordinary place, it would not be amiss, in few words, to give its history.

CHAPTER IV.

Petra. — Arrival. — Entrance to the City. — The Temple of Petra. — A Record. — The Theatre. — Tombs of Petra. — Arab Simplicity. — Departure from Petra. — A Night in a Tomb. — Dangers of the Route.

PETRA, the excavated city, the long-lost capital of Edom, in the Scriptures and profane writings, in every language in which its name occurs, signifies a rock; and, through the shadows of its early history, we learn that its inhabitants lived in natural clefts or excavations made in the solid rock. Desolate as it now is, we have reason to believe that it goes back to the time of Esau, “the father of Edom;” that princes and dukes, eight successive kings, and again a long line of dukes, dwelt there before any king “reigned over Israel;” and we recognise it from the earliest ages as the central point to which came the caravans from the interior of Arabia, Persia, and India, laden with all the precious commodities of the East, and from which these commodities were distributed through Egypt, Palestine, and Syria, and all the countries bordering on the Mediterranean, even Tyre and Sidon deriving their purple and dyes from Petra. Eight hundred years before Christ, Amaziah, the king of Judea, “slew of Edom in the Valley of Salt ten thousand, and

took Selah (the Hebrew name of Petra) by war." Three hundred years after the last of the prophets, and nearly a century before the Christian era, the "King of Arabia" issued from his palace at Petra, at the head of fifty thousand men, horse and foot, entered Jerusalem, and, uniting with the Jews, pressed the siege of the temple, which was only raised by the advance of the Romans; and in the beginning of the second century, though its independence was lost, Petra was still the capital of a Roman province. After that time it rapidly declined; its history became more and more obscure; for more than a thousand years it was completely lost to the civilized world; and until its discovery by Burckhardt in 1812, except to the wandering Bedouins its very site was unknown.

And this was the city at whose door I now stood. In a few words, this ancient and extraordinary city is situated within a natural amphitheatre of two or three miles in circumference, encompassed on all sides by rugged mountains five or six hundred feet in height. The whole of this area is now a waste of ruins, dwelling-houses, palaces, temples, and triumphal arches, all prostrate together in undistinguishable confusion. The sides of the mountains are cut smooth, in a perpendicular direction, and filled with long and continued ranges of dwelling-houses, temples, and tombs, excavated with vast labour out of the solid rock; and while their summits present Nature in her wildest and most savage form, their bases are adorned with all the beauty of architecture and art, with

columns, and porticoes, and pediments, and ranges of corridors, enduring as the mountains out of which they are hewn, and fresh as if the work of a generation scarcely yet gone by.

Nothing can be finer than the immense rocky rampart which encloses the city. Strong, firm, and immoveable as Nature itself, it seems to deride the walls of cities and the puny fortifications of skilful engineers. The only access is by clambering over this wall of stone, practicable only in one place, or by an entrance the most extraordinary that Nature, in her wildest freaks, has ever framed. The loftiest portals ever raised by the hands of man, the proudest monuments of architectural skill and daring, sink into insignificance by the comparison. It is, perhaps, the most wonderful object in the world, except the ruins of the city to which it forms the entrance. Unfortunately, I did not enter by this door, but by clambering over the mountains at the other end; and when I stood upon the summit of the mountain, though I looked down upon the vast area filled with ruined buildings and heaps of rubbish, and saw the mountain-sides cut away so as to form a level surface, and presenting long ranges of doors in successive tiers or stories, the dwelling and burial places of a people long since passed away; and though immediately before me was the excavated front of a large and beautiful temple, I was disappointed. I had read the unpublished description of Captains Irby and Mangles. Several times the sheik had told me, in the most positive

manner, that there was no other entrance ; and I was moved to indignation at the marvellous and exaggerated, not to say false representations, as I thought, of the only persons who had given any account of this wonderful entrance. I was disappointed, too, in another matter. Burckhardt had been accosted, immediately upon his entry, by a large party of Bedouins, and been suffered to remain but a very short time. Messrs. Legh, Banks, Irby, and Mangles had been opposed by hundreds of Bedouins, who swore "that they should never enter their territory nor drink of their waters," and "that they would shoot them like dogs if they attempted it." And I expected some immediate opposition from at least the thirty or forty, fewer than whom, the sheik had told me, were never to be found in Wady Moussa. I expected a scene of some kind ; but at the entrance of the city there was not a creature to dispute our passage ; its portals were wide open, and we passed along the stream down into the area, and still no man came to oppose us. We moved to the extreme end of the area ; and when in the act of dismounting at the foot of the rock on which stood the temple that had constantly faced us, we saw one solitary Arab, straggling along without any apparent object, a mere wanderer among the ruins ; and it is a not uninteresting fact, that this poor Bedouin was the only living being we saw in the desolate city of Petra. After gazing at us for a few moments from a distance, he came towards us, and in a few moments was sitting down

to pipes and coffee with my companions. I again asked the sheik for the other entrance, and he again told me there was none; but I could not believe him, and set out to look for it myself; and although in my search I had already seen enough abundantly to repay me for all my difficulties in getting there, I could not be content without finding this desired avenue.

In front of the great temple, the pride and beauty of Petra, of which more hereafter, I saw a narrow opening in the rocks, exactly corresponding with my conception of the object for which I was seeking. A full stream of water was gushing through it, and filling up the whole mouth of the passage. Mounted on the shoulders of one of my Bedouins, I got him to carry me through the swollen stream at the mouth of the opening, and set me down on a dry place a little above, whence I began to pick my way, occasionally taking to the shoulders of my follower, and continued to advance more than a mile. I was beyond all per-adventure in the great entrance I was seeking. There could not be two such, and I should have gone on to the extreme end of the ravine, but my Bedouin suddenly refused me the further use of his shoulders. He had been some time objecting and begging me to return, and now positively refused to go any farther; and, in fact, turned about himself. I was anxious to proceed, but I did not like wading up to my knees in the water, nor did I feel very resolute to go where I might expose myself to danger, as he seemed to intimate.

While I was hesitating another of my men came running up the ravine, and shortly after him Paul and the sheik, breathless with haste, and crying in low gutturals, "El Arab! el Arab!"—"The Arabs! the Arabs!" This was enough for me. I had heard so much of El Arab that I had become nervous. It was like the cry of Delilah in the ears of the sleeping Samson, "The Philistines be upon thee." At the other end of the ravine was an encampment of the El Alouins; and the sheik, having due regard to my communication about money matters, had shunned this entrance to avoid bringing upon me this horde of tribute-gatherers for a participation in the spoils. Without any disposition to explore farther, I turned towards the city; and it was now that I began to feel the powerful and indelible impression that must be produced on entering, through this mountainous passage, the excavated city of Petra.

For about two miles it lies between high and precipitous ranges of rocks, from five hundred to a thousand feet in height, standing as if torn asunder by some great convulsion, and barely wide enough for two horsemen to pass abreast. A swelling stream rushes between them; the summits are wild and broken; in some places overhanging the opposite sides, casting the darkness of night upon the narrow defile; then receding and forming an opening above, through which a strong ray of light is thrown down, and illuminates with the blaze of day the frightful chasm below. Wild fig-trees, oleanders, and ivy were growing

out of the rocky sides of the cliffs hundreds of feet above our heads ; the eagle was screaming above us ; all along were the open doors of tombs, forming the great Necropolis of the city ; and at the extreme end was a large open space, with a powerful body of light thrown down upon it, and exhibiting in one full view the façade of a beautiful temple, hewn out of the rock, with rows of Corinthian columns and ornaments, standing out fresh and clear as if but yesterday from the hands of the sculptor. Though coming directly from the banks of the Nile, where the preservation of the temples excites the admiration and astonishment of every traveller, we were roused and excited by the extraordinary beauty and excellent condition of the great temple at Petra. Even in coming upon it, as we did, at disadvantage, I remember that Paul, who was a passionate admirer of the arts, when he first obtained a glimpse of it, involuntarily cried out, and moving on to the front with a vivacity I never saw him exhibit before or afterward, clapped his hands, and shouted in ecstasy. To the last day of our being together he was in the habit of referring to his extraordinary fit of enthusiasm when he first came upon that temple ; and I can well imagine that, entering by this narrow defile, with the feelings roused by its extraordinary and romantic wildness and beauty, the first view of that superb façade must produce an effect which could never pass away. Even now, that I have returned to the pursuits and thought-engrossing incidents of a life in the

busiest city in the world, often in situations as widely different as light from darkness, I see before me the façade of that temple ; neither the Coliseum at Rome, grand and interesting as it is, nor the ruins of the Acropolis at Athens, nor the Pyramids, nor the mighty temples of the Nile, are so often present to my memory.

The whole temple, its columns, ornaments, porticoes, and porches, are cut out from, and form part of, the solid rock ; and this rock, at the foot of which the temple stands like a mere print, towers several hundred feet above, its face cut smooth to the very summit, and the top remaining wild and misshapen as Nature made it. The whole area before the temple is perhaps an acre in extent, enclosed on all sides except at the narrow entrance, and an opening to the left of the temple, which leads into the area of the city by a pass through perpendicular rocks five or six hundred feet in height.

It is not my design to enter into the details of the many monuments in this extraordinary city ; but, to give a general idea of the character of all the excavations, I cannot do better than go within the temple. Ascending several broad steps, we entered under a colonnade of four Corinthian columns, about thirty-five feet high, into a large chamber of some fifty feet square and twenty-five feet high. The outside of the temple is richly ornamented, but the interior is perfectly plain, there being no ornament of any kind upon the walls or ceiling ; on each of the three sides is a

small chamber for the reception of the dead ; and on the back wall of the innermost chamber I saw the names of Messrs. Legh, Banks, Irby, and Mangles, the four English travellers who with so much difficulty had effected their entrance to the city ; of Messieurs Laborde and Linant, and the two Englishmen and Italian of whom I have before spoken ; and two or three others, which, from the character of the writing, I supposed to be the names of attendants upon some of these gentlemen. These were the only names recorded in the temple ; and, besides Burckhardt, no other traveller had ever reached it. I was the first American who had ever been there. Many of my countrymen, probably, as was the case with me, have never known the existence of such a city ; and, independently of all personal considerations, I confess that I felt what, I trust, was not an inexcusable pride, in writing upon the innermost wall of that temple the name of an American citizen ; and under it, and flourishing on its own account in temples, and tombs, and all the most conspicuous places in Petra, is the illustrious name of Paulo Nuozzo, dragomano.

Leaving the temple and the open area on which it fronts, and following the stream, we entered another defile much broader than the first, on each side of which were ranges of tombs, with sculptured doors and columns ; and on the left, in the bosom of the mountain, hewn out of the solid rock, is a large theatre, circular in form, the pillars in front fallen, and containing thirty-three

rows of seats, capable of containing more than three thousand persons. Above the corridor was a range of doors opening to chambers in the rocks, the seats of the princes and wealthiest inhabitants of Petra, and not unlike a row of private boxes in a modern theatre.

The whole theatre is at this day in such a state of preservation, that if the tenants of the tombs around could once more rise into life, they might take their old places on its seats, and listen to the declamation of their favourite player. To me the stillness of a ruined city is nowhere so impressive as when sitting on the steps of its theatre; once thronged with the gay and pleasure-seeking, but now given up to solitude and desolation. Day after day these seats had been filled, and the now silent rocks had echoed to the applauding shout of thousands; and little could an ancient Edomite imagine that a solitary stranger, from a then unknown world, would one day be wandering among the ruins of his proud and wonderful city, meditating upon the fate of a race that has for ages passed away. Where are ye, inhabitants of this desolate city? ye who once sat on the seats of this theatre, the young, the high-born, the beautiful, and brave: who once rejoiced in your riches and power, and lived as if there was no grave? Where are ye now? Even the very tombs, whose open doors are stretching away in long ranges before the eyes of the wondering traveller, cannot reveal the mystery of your doom: your dry bones are gone; the robber has invaded your graves, and

your very ashes have been swept away to make room for the wandering Arab of the desert.

But we need not stop at the days when a gay population were crowding to this theatre. In the earliest periods of recorded time, long before this theatre was built, and long before the tragic muse was known, a great city stood here. When Esau, having sold his birthright for a mess of pottage, came to his portion among the mountains of Seir; and Edom, growing in power and strength, became presumptuous and haughty, until, in her pride, when Israel prayed a passage through her country, Edom said unto Israel, "Thou shalt not pass by me, lest I come out against thee with the sword."

Amid all the terrible denunciations against the land of Idumea, "her cities and the inhabitants thereof," this proud city among the rocks, doubtless for its extraordinary sins, was always marked as a subject of extraordinary vengeance. "I have sworn by myself, saith the Lord, that Bozrah (the strong or fortified city) shall become a desolation, a reproach, a waste, and a curse, and all the cities thereof shall be perpetual waste. Lo, I will make thee small among the heathen, and despised among men. Thy terribleness hath deceived thee, and the pride of thine heart, oh, thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rocks, that holdest the height of the hill; though thou shouldest make thy nest as high as the eagle, I will bring thee down from thence, saith the Lord."* "They shall call the

* Jeremiah xlix. 13, 15, 16.

nobles thereof to the kingdom, but none shall be there, and all her princes shall be nothing; and thorns shall come up in her palaces, nettles and brambles in the fortresses thereof, and it shall be an habitation of dragons, and a court for owls.”*

I would that the sceptic could stand as I did among the ruins of this city among the rocks, and there open the sacred book and read the words of the inspired penman, written when this desolate place was one of the greatest cities in the world. I see the scoff arrested, his cheek pale, his lip quivering, and his heart quaking with fear, as the ruined city cries out to him in a voice loud and powerful as that of one risen from the dead; though he would not believe Moses and the prophets, he believes the handwriting of God himself in the desolation and eternal ruin around him. We sat on the steps of the theatre, and made our noonday meal; our drink was from the pure stream that rolled down at our feet. Paul and myself were alone. We scared the partridge before us as we ascended, and I broke for a moment the stillness of the desolate city by the report of my gun.

All around the theatre, in the sides of the mountains, were ranges of tombs; and directly opposite they rose in long tiers one above another. Having looked into those around the theatre, I crossed to those opposite; and, carefully as the brief time I had would allow, examined the whole range. Though I had no small experience in ex-

* Isaiah xxxiv. 12, 13.

ploring catacombs and tombs, these were so different from any I had seen, that I found it difficult to distinguish the habitations of the living from the chambers of the dead. The façades or architectural decorations of the front were everywhere handsome; and in this they differed materially from the tombs in Egypt; in the latter the doors were simply an opening in the rock, and all the grandeur and beauty of the work within; while here the door was always imposing in its appearance, and the interior was generally a simple chamber, unpainted and unsculptured.

I say that I could not distinguish the dwellings from the tombs; but this was not invariably the case; some were clearly tombs, for there were pits in which the dead had been laid, and others were as clearly dwellings, being without a place for the deposite of the dead. One of these last particularly attracted my attention. It consisted of one large chamber, having on one side, at the foot of the wall, a stone bench about a foot high, and two or three broad, in form like the divans in the East at the present day; at the other end were several small apartments, hewn out of the rock, with partition walls left between them, like stalls in a stable, and these had probably been the sleeping apartments of the different members of the family, the mysteries of bars and bolts, of folding-doors and third stories, being unknown in the days of the ancient Edomites. There were no paintings or decorations of any kind within the chamber; but the rock out of which it was

hewn, like the whole stony rampart that encircled the city, was of a peculiarity and beauty that I never saw elsewhere, being a dark ground, with veins of white, blue, red, purple, and sometimes scarlet and light orange, running through it in rainbow streaks; and within the chambers, where there had been no exposure to the action of the elements, the freshness and beauty of the colours in which these waving lines were drawn gave an effect hardly inferior to that of the paintings in the tombs of the kings at Thebes. From its high and commanding position, and the unusual finish of the work, this house, if so it may be called, had no doubt been the residence of one who had strutted his hour of brief existence among the wealthy citizens of Petra. In front was a large table of rock, forming a sort of court for the excavated dwelling, where probably, year after year, in this beautiful climate, the Edomite of old sat under the gathering shades of evening, sometimes looking down upon the congregated thousands and the stirring scenes in the theatre beneath, or beyond upon the palaces and dwellings in the area of the then populous city.

Farther on in the same range, though, in consequence of the steps of the streets being broken, we were obliged to go down and ascend again before we could reach it, was another temple, like the first, cut out of the solid rock, and, like the first too, having for its principal ornament a large urn, shattered and bruised by musket balls; for the ignorant Arab, believing that gold is conceal-

ed in it, day after day, as he passes, levels at it his murderous gun, in the vain hope to break the vessel and scatter a golden shower on the ground.

But it would be unprofitable to dwell upon details. In the exceeding interest of the scene around me, I hurried from place to place, utterly insensible to physical fatigue; and being entirely alone, and having a full and undisturbed range of the ruins, I clambered up broken staircases and among the ruins of streets; and, looking into one excavation, passed on to another and another, and made the whole circuit of the desolate city. There, on the spot, everything had an interest which I cannot give in description; and if the reader has followed me so far, I have too much regard for him to drag him about after me as I did Paul. I am warned of the consequences by what occurred with that excellent and patient follower; for, before the day was over, he was completely worn out with fatigue.

The shades of evening were gathering around us as we stood for the last time on the steps of the theatre. Perfect as has been the fulfilment of the prophecy in regard to this desolate city, in no one particular has its truth been more awfully verified than in the complete destruction of its inhabitants; in the extermination of the race of the Edomites. In the same day, and by the voice of the same prophets, came the separate denunciations against the descendants of Israel and Edom, declaring against both a complete

change of their temporal condition ; and while the Jews have been dispersed in every country under heaven, and are still, in every land, a separate and unmixed people, “ the Edomites have been cut off for ever, and there is not any remaining of the house of Esau.”

“ Wisdom has departed from Teman, and understanding out of the mount of Esau ;” and the miserable Arab who now roams over the land cannot appreciate or understand the works of its ancient inhabitants. In the summer he cultivates the few valleys in which seed will grow, and in the winter makes his habitation in the tombs ; and, stimulated by vague and exaggerated traditionary notions of the greatness and wealth of the people who have gone before him, his barbarous hand is raised against the remaining monuments of their arts ; and, as he breaks to atoms the sculptured stone, he expects to gather up their long-hidden treasures. I could have lingered for days on the steps of that theatre, for I never was at a place where such a crowd of associations pressed upon the mind. But the sheik was hurrying me away. From the first he had told me that I must not pass a night within the city ; and begging me not to tempt my fortune too rashly, he was perpetually urging me to make my retreat while there was yet time. He said that, if the Arabs at the other end of the great entrance heard of a stranger being there, they would be down upon me to a man, and, not content with extorting money, would cer-

tainly prevent my visiting the tomb of Aaron. He had touched the right chord ; and considering that weeks or months could not impress the scene more strongly on my mind, and that I was no artist, and could not carry away on paper the plans and models of ancient art, I mounted my horse from the very steps of the theatre, and followed the sheik in his progress up the valley. Turning back from the theatre, the whole area of the city burst upon the sight at once, filled with crumbling masses of rock and stone, the ruined habitation of a people long since perished from the face of the earth, and encompassed on every side by high ranges of mountains ; and the sides of these were cut smooth, even to the summit, hundreds of feet above my head as I rode past, and filled with long continued ranges of open doors, the entrances to dwellings and tombs, of which the small connecting staircases were not visible at a distance, and many of the tenements seemed utterly inaccessible.

Every moment the sheik was becoming more and more impatient ; and, spurring my horse, I followed him on a gallop among the ruins. We ascended the valley, and rising to the summit of the rocky rampart, it was almost dark when we found ourselves opposite a range of tombs in the suburbs of the city. Here we dismounted ; and selecting from among them one which, from its finish and dimensions, must have been the last abode of some wealthy Edomite, we prepared to pass the night within its walls. I was completely

worn out when I threw myself on the rocky floor of the tomb. I had just completed one of the most interesting days in my life; for the singular character of the city, and the uncommon beauty of its ruins, its great antiquity, the prophetic denunciations of whose truth it was the witness, its loss for more than a thousand years to the civilized world, its very existence being known only to the wandering Arab, the difficulty of reaching it, and the hurried and dangerous manner in which I had reached it, gave a thrilling and almost fearful interest to the time and place, of which I feel it utterly impossible to convey any idea.

In the morning Paul and I had determined, when our companions should be asleep, to ascend Mount Hor by moonlight; but now we thought only of rest; and seldom has the pampered tenant of a palace laid down with greater satisfaction upon his canopied bed than I did upon the stony floor of this tomb in Petra. In the front part of it was a large chamber, about twenty-five feet square and ten feet high; and behind this was another of smaller dimensions, furnished with receptacles for the dead, not arranged after the manner of shelves extending along the wall, as in the catacombs I had seen in Italy and Egypt, but cut lengthwise in the rock, like ovens, so as to admit the insertion of the body with the feet foremost.

We built a fire in the outer chamber, thus lighting up the innermost recesses of the tombs; and,

after our evening meal, while sipping coffee and smoking pipes, the sheik congratulated me upon my extreme good fortune in having seen Petra without any annoyance from the Bedouins; adding, as usual, that it was a happy day for me when I saw his face at Cairo. He told me that he had never been to Wady Moussa without seeing at least thirty or forty Arabs, and sometimes three or four hundred; that when Abdel Hag (M. Linant) and M. Laborde visited Petra the first time, they were driven out by the Bedouins after remaining only five hours, and were chased down into the valley, M. Linant changing his dromedary every three hours on the way back to Akaba; that there he remained, pretending to be sick, for twenty-four days, every day feasting half the tribe; and during that time sending to Cairo for money, dresses, swords, guns, pistols, ammunition, &c. which he distributed among them so lavishly that the whole tribe escorted him in triumph to Petra. This is so different from M. Laborde's account of his visit, that it cannot be true. I asked him about the visit of Messrs. Legh and Banks, and Captains Irby and Mangles; and drawing close to me, so as not to be overheard by the rest, he told me that he remembered their visit well; that they came from Kerek with three sheiks and three or four hundred men, and that the Bedouins of Wady Moussa turned out against them more than two thousand strong. His uncle was then the sheik, and he himself a young man; and, if his account is true, which cannot, how-

ever, be, as it is entirely different from theirs, he began the life of a knave so young, that, though he had no great field for exercise, he ought then to have been something of a proficient ; he said, that while they were negotiating and parleying, one of the strange Arabs slipped into his hands a purse with a hundred pieces of gold, which he showed to his uncle, and proposed to him that they should use their influence to procure the admission of the strangers, and divide the money between them ; and so wrought upon the old man that he procured their entrance, telling the tribe that one of the strangers was sick, and, if they did not admit them into Wady Moussa, he would take them to his tent ; and, added the sheik, his eyes sparkling with low cunning, my uncle and I ate the whole of that gold without any one of the tribe ever knowing anything about it.

One piece of information he gave me, which I thought very likely to be true ; that the road to Petra, and thence through Idumea in any direction, never could be pursued with assurance of safety, or become a frequented route, because the Bedouins would always be lying in wait for travellers, to exact tribute or presents ; and although a little might sometimes content them, at others their demands would be exorbitant, and quarrels and bad consequences to the traveller would be almost sure to follow ; and he added, in reference to our visit, that, as soon as the Arabs should hear of a stranger having been at Petra, they would be down in swarms ; and perhaps even now

would follow us into the valley. I was satisfied that I had made a fortunate escape, not, perhaps, from personal danger, but from grinding exactions, if not from robbery; and, congratulating myself upon my good fortune so far, I began to feel my way for what I now regarded as important as before I had thought the journey to Petra, namely, a visit to the tomb of Aaron.

My companions opposed my going to it, saying that no Christian had ever done so; and that none but Mussulmans went there, and they only to sacrifice a sheep upon the tomb. I told them that I also designed to sacrifice; and that, like them, we regarded Aaron as a prophet; that my visit to Petra was nothing unless I made the sacrifice; and that my conscience would not be at ease unless I performed it according to my vow. This notice of my pious purpose smoothed some of the difficulties, as the Arabs knew that after the sacrifice the sheep must be eaten. The sheik was much more liberal or more indifferent than the rest, and my desire was finally assented to; although, in winding up a long discussion about the pedigree of Aaron, one of them held out to the last that Aaron was a Mussulman, and would not believe that he lived before Mohammed. He had an indefinite idea that Mohammed was the greatest man that ever lived, and in his mind this was not consistent with the idea of any one having lived before him.

My plans for the morrow being all arranged, the Bedouins stretched themselves out in the outer

chamber, while I went within ; and seeking out a tomb as far back as I could find, I crawled in feet first, and found myself very much in the condition of a man buried alive. But never did a man go to his tomb with so much satisfaction as I felt. I was very tired ; the night was cold, and here I was completely sheltered. I had just room enough to turn round ; and the worthy old Edomite for whom the tomb was made never slept in it more quietly than I did. Little did he imagine that his bones would one day be scattered to the winds, and a straggling American and a horde of Bedouins, born and living thousands of miles from each other, would be sleeping quietly in his tomb, alike ignorant and careless of him for whom it was built.

CHAPTER V.

A bold Endeavour. — Unexpected Obstacles. — Disadvantage of a Dress. — The Dead Sea. — A New Project. — The Tomb of Aaron. — An Alarm. — Descent of the Mountain. — An awkward Meeting. — Poetic Licence. — All's Well that Ends Well. — Unexpected Dignities. — Arab Notions of Travel.

A MAN rising from a tomb with all his clothes on does not require much time for the arrangement of his toilet. In less than half an hour we had breakfasted, and were again on our way. Forgetting all that had engrossed my thoughts and feelings the day before, I now fixed my eyes upon the tomb of Aaron, on the summit of Mount Hor. The mountain was high, towering above all the rest, bare and rugged to its very summit, without a tree or even a bush growing on its sterile side; and our road lay directly along its base. The Bedouins again began to show an unwillingness to allow my visit to the tomb; and the sheik himself told me that it would take half the day, and perhaps be the means of bringing upon me some of the horde I had escaped. I saw that they were disposed to prevent me from accomplishing my object; and I felt sure that, if we met any strange Arabs, my purpose would certainly be defeated. I suspected them of stratagem, and

began to think of resorting to stratagem myself. They remembered the sheep, however, and told me that the sacrifice could as well be performed at the base as on the summit of the mountain; but this, of course, would not satisfy my conscience.

With my eyes constantly fixed on the top of the mountain, I had thought for some time that it would not be impracticable to ascend from the side on which I was. Paul and I examined the localities as carefully as a couple of engineers seeking an assailable place to scale the wall of a fortified city; and afraid to wait till they had matured some plan of opposing me, I determined to take them by surprise; and throwing myself from my horse, and telling Paul to say that we would climb the mountain here, and meet them on the other side, I was almost out of hearing before they had recovered from their astonishment. Paul followed me, and the sheik and his men stood for some time without moving, irresolute what to do; and it was not until we had advanced considerably on the mountain that we saw the caravan again slowly moving along its base. None of them offered to accompany us, though we should have been glad to have had one or two with us on our expedition.

For some distance we found the ascent sufficiently smooth and easy—much more so than that of Mount Sinai—and, so far as we could see before us, it was likely to continue the same all the way up. We were railing at the sheik for want-

ing to carry us around to the other side, and congratulating ourselves upon having attempted it here, when we came to a yawning and precipitous chasm, opening its horrid jaws almost from the very base of the mountain. From the distance at which we had marked out our route, the inequalities of surface could not be distinguished, but here it was quite another thing. We stood on the brink of the chasm, and looked at each other in blank amazement; and at a long distance, as they wound along the base of the mountain, I thought I could see a quiet smile of derision lighting up the grim visages of my Bedouin companions. We stood upon the edge of the chasm, looking down into its deep abyss, like the spirits of the departed lingering on the shores of the Styx, vainly wishing for a ferryman to carry us over, and our case seemed perfectly hopeless without some such aid. But the days when genii and spirits lent their kind assistance to the sons of men are gone; if a man finds himself in a ditch, he must get out of it as well as he can, and so it was with us on the brink of this chasm. Bad, however, as was our prospect in looking forward, we had not yet begun to look back; and as soon as we saw there was no possibility of getting over it, we began to descend; and groping, sliding, jumping, and holding on with hands and feet, we reached the bottom of the gully; and, after another hard half hour's toil, were resting our wearied limbs upon the opposite brink, at about the same elevation as that of the place from which we had started.

This success encouraged us ; and, without caring or thinking how we should come down again, we felt only the spirit of the seaman's cry to the trembling sailor boy, " Look aloft, you lubber ;" and looking aloft, we saw through a small opening before us, though still at a great distance, the white dome that covered the tomb of the first high-priest of Israel. Again with stout hearts we resumed our ascent ; but, as we might reasonably have supposed, that which we had passed was not the only chasm in the mountains. What had appeared to us slight inequalities of surface we found great fissures and openings, presenting themselves before us in quick succession ; not, indeed, as absolute and insurmountable barriers to farther progress, but affording us only the encouragement of a bare possibility of crossing them. The whole mountain, from its base to its summit, was rocky and naked, affording not a tree or bush to assist us ; and all that we had to hold on by were the rough and broken corners of the porous sandstone rocks, which crumbled in our hands and under our feet, and more than once put us in danger of our lives. Several times, after desperate exertion, we sat down perfectly discouraged at seeing another and another chasm before us, and more than once we were on the point of giving up the attempt, thinking it impossible to advance any farther ; but we had come so far, and taken so little notice of our road, that it was almost as impossible to return ; and a distant and accidental glimpse of the whitened dome would revive our

courage, and stimulate us to another effort. Several times I mounted on Paul's shoulders, and with his helping reached the top of a precipitous or overhanging rock, where, lying down with my face over the brink, I took up the pistols, swords, &c., and then helped him up in turn; sometimes, again, he was the climber, and my shoulders were the stepping-stone; and, in the rough grasps that we gave each other, neither thought of the relation of master and servant. On the sides of that rugged mountain, so desolate, so completely removed from the world, whose difficult ascent had been attempted by few human footsteps since the days when "Moses and Aaron went up in sight of all the congregation," the master and the man lay on the same rock, encountering the same fatigues and dangers, and inspired by the same hopes and fears. My dress was particularly bad for the occasion; for, besides the encumbrance of pistols and a sword, my long silk gown and large sleeve were a great annoyance, as I wanted every moment a long reach of the arm and full play of the legs; even our light Turkish slippers were impediments in our desperate scramble, and we were obliged to pull them off, for the better hold that could be taken with the naked feet.

It will be remembered that we were ascending on the eastern side of the mountain; and in one of our pauses to breathe, when about half way up, we looked back upon the high rampart of rocks that enclosed the city of Petra; and on the outside of the rock we saw the façade of a beautiful

temple, resembling in its prominent features, but seeming larger and more beautiful than, the Khasne of Pharaoh opposite the principal entrance of the city. I have no doubt that a visit to that temple would have abundantly repaid me for the day I should have lost ; for, besides its architectural beauty, it would have been curious to examine, and, if possible, discover why it was constructed, standing alone outside of the city, and, as it appeared, apart from everything connected with the habitations of the Edomites. But as yet we had work enough before us. Disencumbering ourselves of all our useless trappings, shoes, pistols, swords, tobacco-pouch, and water-sack, which we tied together in a sash and the roll of a turban, by dint of climbing, pushing, and lifting each other, after the most arduous upward scramble I ever accomplished, we attained the bald and hoary summit of the mountain ; and, before we had time to look around, at the extreme end of the desolate valley of El Ghor, our attention was instantly attracted and engrossed by one of the most interesting objects in the world, and Paul and I exclaimed at the same moment, "The Dead Sea !" Lying between the barren mountains of Arabia and Judea, presenting to us from that height no more than a small, calm, and silvery surface, was that mysterious sea which rolled its dark waters over the guilty cities of Sodom and Gomorrah ; over whose surface, according to the superstition of the Arabs, no bird can fly, and in whose waters no fish can swim ; constantly re-

ceiving in its greedy bosom the whole body of the Jordan, but, unlike all other waters, sending forth no tribute to the ocean. A new idea entered my mind. I would follow the desert valley of El Ghor to the shores of the Dead Sea, along whose savage borders I would coast to the ruined Jericho and the hallowed Jordan, and search in its deadly waters for the ruins of the doomed and blasted cities.

If I had never stood on the top of Mount Sinai, I should say that nothing could exceed the desolation of the view from the summit of Mount Hor, its most striking objects being the dreary and rugged mountains of Seir, bare and naked of trees and verdure, and heaving their lofty summits to the skies, as if in a vain and fruitless effort to excel the mighty pile, on the top of which the high-priest of Israel was buried. Before me was a land of barrenness and ruin; a land accursed by God, and against which the prophets had set their faces; the land of which it is thus written in the Book of Life: "Moreover, the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, set thy face against Mount Seir, and prophesy against it, and say unto it, Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, oh Mount Seir, I am against thee, and I will stretch out mine hand against thee, and I will make thee most desolate. I will lay thy cities waste, and thou shalt be desolate; and thou shalt know that I am the Lord. Because thou hast had a perpetual hatred, and hast shed the blood of the children of Israel by the force of the sword in

the time of their calamity, in the time that their iniquity had an end : therefore, as I live, saith the Lord God, I will prepare thee unto blood, and blood shall pursue thee : sith thou hast not hated blood, even blood shall pursue thee. Thus will I make Mount Seir most desolate, and cut off from it him that passeth out and him that returneth. And I will fill his mountains with his slain men : in thy hills, and in thy valleys, and in all thy rivers shall they fall that are slain with the sword. I will make thee perpetual desolations, and thy cities shall not return : and ye shall know that I am the Lord.”*

The Bible account of the death of Aaron is—
“And the children of Israel, even the whole congregation, journeyed from Kadesh, and came unto Mount Hor. And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron in Mount ‘Hor, by the coast of the land of Edom, saying, Aaron shall be gathered unto his people : for he shall not enter into the land which I have given unto the children of Israel, because ye rebelled against my word at the water of Meribah. Take Aaron and Eleazer his son, and bring them up unto Mount Hor ; and strip Aaron of his garments, and put them upon Eleazer his son : and Aaron shall be gathered unto his people, and shall die there. And Moses did as the Lord commanded : and they went up into Mount Hor, in the sight of all the congregation. And Moses stripped Aaron of his garments, and put them upon Eleazer his son ; and Aaron

* Ezekiel xxxv.

died there in the top of the mount : and Moses and Eleazer came down from the mount. And when all the congregation saw that Aaron was dead, they mourned for Aaron thirty days, even all the house of Israel.”*

On the very “top of the mount,” revered alike by Mussulmans and Christians, is the tomb of Aaron. The building is about thirty feet square, containing a single chamber ; in front of the door is a tombstone, in form like the oblong slabs in our churchyards, but larger and higher ; the top rather larger than the bottom, and covered with a ragged pall of faded red cotton in shreds and patches. At its head stood a high round stone, on which the Mussulman offers his sacrifices. The stone was blackened with smoke ; stains of blood and fragments of burnt brush were still about it ; all was ready but the victim ; and when I saw the reality of the preparations, I was very well satisfied to have avoided the necessity of conforming to the Mussulman custom. A few ostrich eggs, the usual ornaments of a mosque, were suspended from the ceiling, and the rest of the chamber was perfectly bare. After going out, and from the very top of the tomb surveying again and again the desolate and dreary scene that presented itself on every side, always terminating with the distant view of the Dead Sea, I returned within ; and examining once more the tomb and the altar, walked carefully around the chamber. There was no light except what came

* Numbers xx.

from the door ; and, in groping in the extreme corner on one side, my foot descended into an aperture in the floor. I put it down carefully, and found a step, then another, and another, evidently a staircase leading to a chamber below. I went down till my head was on the level of the floor, but could see nothing ; all was dark, and I called to Paul to strike a light. Most provokingly, he had no materials with him. He generally carried a flint and steel for lighting his pipe with ; but now, when I most wanted it, he had none. I went back to the staircase, and, descending to the bottom of the steps, attempted to make out what the place might be ; but it was utterly impossible. I could not see even the steps on which I stood. I again came out, and made Paul search all his pockets for the steel and flint. My curiosity increased with the difficulty of gratifying it ; and in a little while, when the thing seemed to be utterly impossible, with this hole unexplored, Petra, Mount Hor, and the Dead Sea appeared to lose half their interest. I ran up and down the steps, inside and out, abused Paul and struck stones together in the hope of eliciting a spark ; but all to no purpose. I was in an agony of despair, when I found myself grasping convulsively the handle of my pistol. A light broke suddenly upon me. A pile of dry brush and cotton rags lay at the foot of the sacrificial altar ; I fired my pistol into it, gave one puff, and the whole mass was in a blaze. Each seized a burning brand, and we descended. At the foot of the

steps was a narrow chamber, at the other end an iron grating, opening in the middle, and behind the grating a tomb cut in the naked rock, guarded and revered as the tomb of Aaron. I tore aside the rusty grating, and thrusting in my arm up to the shoulders, touched the hallowed spot. The rocks and mountains were echoing the discharge of my pistol, like peals of crashing thunder; and, while with the burning brand in one hand, I was thrusting the other through the grating, the deafening reverberations seemed to rebuke me for an act of sacrilege, and I rushed up the steps like a guilty and fear-struck criminal. Suddenly I heard from the foot of the mountain a quick and irregular discharge of fire-arms, which again resounded in loud echoes through the mountains. It was far from my desire that the bigoted Mussulmans should come upon me, and find me with my pistol still smoking in my hand, and the brush still burning in the tomb of the prophet; and, tearing off a piece of the ragged pall, we hurried from the place and dashed down the mountain on the opposite side with a speed and recklessness that only fear could give. If there was room for question between a scramble or a jump, we gave the jump; and, when we could not jump, our shoes were off in a moment, one leaned over the brow of the precipice, and gave the other his hand, and down we went, allowing nothing to stop us. Once for a moment we were at a loss; but Paul, who, in the excitement of one successful leap after another, had become amazingly

confident, saw a stream of water, and made for it with the glorious boast that where water descended we could; and the suggestion proved correct, although the water found much less difficulty in getting down than we did. In short, after an ascent the most toilsome, and a descent the most hairbrained and perilous it was ever my fortune to accomplish, in about half an hour we were at the base of the mountain, but still hurrying on to join our escort.

We had only to cross a little valley to reach the regular camel-track, when we saw from behind a slightly elevated range of rocks the head and long neck of a dromedary; a Bedouin was on his back, but, riding sidewise, did not see us. Another came, and another, and another; then two or three, and, finally, half a dozen at a time, the blackest, grimmest, and ugliest vagabonds I had ever yet seen. A moment before Paul and I had both complained of fatigue, but it is astonishing how the sight of these honest men revived us; any one seeing the manner in which we scoured along the side of the mountain would have thought that all our consciousness was in our legs. The course we were pursuing when we first saw them would have brought us on the regular camel-track a little in advance of them, but now our feet seemed to cling to the sides of the mountain. We were in a humour for almost calling on the rocks to fall upon us and cover us; and, if there had been a good dodging-place, I am afraid I should here have to say that we had taken advantage of

it until the very unwelcome caravan passed by ; but the whole surface of the country, whether on mountain side or in valley's depth, was bare and naked as a floor ; there was not a bush to obstruct the view ; and soon we stood revealed to these unpleasant witnesses of our agility. They all shouted to us at once ; and we returned the salute, looking at them over our shoulders, but pushing on as fast as we could walk. In civilized society, our course of proceeding would have been considered a decided cut ; but the unmannerly savages did not know when they received a civil cut, and were bent on cultivating our acquaintance. With a loud shout, slipping off their camels and whipping up their dromedaries, they left the track, and dashed across the valley to intercept us. I told Paul that it was all over, and now we must brazen it out ; and we had just time to turn around and reconnoitre for a moment, before we were almost trodden under foot by their dromedaries.

With the accounts that we had read and heard of these Bedouins, it was not a pleasant thing to fall into their hands alone ; and, without the protection of the sheik, we had reason to apprehend bad treatment. We were on a rising ground ; and, as they came bounding towards us, I had time to remark that there was not a gun or pistol among them ; but every one, old and young, big and little, carried an enormous sword slung over his back, the hilt coming up towards the left shoulder, and in his hand a large club, with a

knot at the end as large as a doubled fist. Though I had no idea of making any resistance, it was a satisfaction to feel that they might have some respect for our fire-arms; as even a Bedouin's logic can teach him, that though a gun or pistol can kill but one, no man in a crowd can tell but that he may be that one. Our armory, however, was not in the best condition for immediate use. I had fired one of my pistols in the tomb of Aaron and lost the flint of the other; and Paul had burst the priming cap on one of his barrels, and the other was charged with bird-shot.

It seemed that there was nothing hostile in their intentions; for though they came upon us with a wild and clamorous shout, their dark eyes appeared to sparkle with delight as they shook us by the hand, and their tumultuous greeting, to compare small things with great, reminded me of the wild welcome which the Arabs of Saladin gave to the litter of the Queen of England, when approaching the Diamond of the Desert on the shores of the Dead Sea. Nevertheless, I looked suspiciously upon all their demonstrations of good-will; and, though I returned all their greetings, even to the kiss on their black faces, I would rather have been looking at them through the bars of an iron grating. But Paul behaved like a hero, although he was a supreme coward, and admitted it himself.* I knew that every-

* Paul's explanation of his cowardice was somewhat remarkable, and perhaps veracious. He said that he was by

thing depended upon him ; but they had come upon us in such a hurry, and so few words had passed between us, that I had no idea how he stood affected. His first words reassured me ; and really, if he had passed all his life in taming Bedouins, he could not have conducted himself more gallantly or sensibly. He shook hands with one, took a pipe from the mouth of another, kicked the dromedary of a third, and patted his owner on the back, smoking, laughing, and talking all the time, ringing the changes upon the Sheik El Alouin, Habeeb Effendi, and Abdel Hasis. I knew that he was lying from his remarkable amplitude of words, and from his constantly mixing up Abdel Hasis (myself) with the Habeeb Effendi, the prime minister of the Pacha ; but he was going on so smoothly that I had not the heart to stop him ; and besides, I thought he was playing for himself as well as for me, and I had no right to put him in danger by interfering. At length, all talking together, and Paul's voice rising above the rest, in force as well as frequency, we returned to the track, and proceeded forward in a body to find the sheik.

Not to be too heavy on Paul for the little

nature brave enough, but that, when travelling in Syria, about three years before, with Mr. Wellesley—a natural son of the Duke of Wellington—their party was stopped by Arabs, and their two kervashes, without any parley, raised their muskets and shot two of the poor savages dead before his face ; which had such an effect upon his nerves as to give him a horror of lead and cold steel ever since.

wanderings of his tongue, I will barely mention such as he remembered himself. Beginning with a solemn assurance that we had not been in Wady Moussa or Petra (for this was his cardinal point), he affirmed that I was a Turk making a pilgrimage to the tomb of Aaron under a vow; and that, when Sheik El Alouin was at Cairo, the Habeeb Effendi had taken me to the sheik's tent, and had told him to conduct me to Djebel Haroun, or Mount Hor, and from thence to Hebron (Khalil), and that, if I arrived in safety, he, the Habeeb Effendi, would pay him well for it. We went on very well for a little while; but by and by the Bedouins began talking earnestly among themselves, and a fine, wicked-looking boy, leaning down from the hump of his barebacked dromedary, with sparkling eyes thrust out his hand and whispered bucksheesh; an old dried-up man echoed it in a hoarse voice directly in my ears; and one after another joined in, till the whole party, with their deep-toned gutturals, were croaking the odious and ominous demand that grated harshly on my nerves. Their black eyes were turned upon me with a keen and eager brightness; the harsh cry was growing louder every moment; and I had already congratulated myself upon having very little about my person, and Paul was looking over his shoulders, and flourishing the Habeeb Effendi and the Sheik El Alouin with as loud a voice as ever, but evidently with a fainting heart; bucksheesh, bucksheesh, bucksheesh was drown-

ing every other noise, when a sudden turn in the road brought us upon the sheik and his attendants. The whole party were in confusion ; some were descending the bare sides of the mountains, others were coming down with their dromedaries upon a full run ; the sheik's brother, on my horse, was galloping along the base ; and the sheik himself, with his long red dress streaming in the wind, and his spear poised in the air, was dashing full speed across the plain. All seemed to catch a glimpse of us at the same moment, and at the same moment all stopped. The sheik stood for a little space, as if astonished and confounded at seeing us attended by such an escort ; and then spurring again his fiery horse, moved a few paces towards us, and dismounting, struck his spear in the sand, and waited to receive us. The men came in from all quarters ; and, almost at the same moment, all had gathered around the spear. The sheik seemed more alarmed than any of us, and Paul said he turned perfectly green. He had heard the report of the pistol, which had given him much uneasiness ; the men had answered, and scattered themselves abroad in search of us ; and now seeing us come up in the midst of such a horde of Bedouins, he supposed that we had opened an account which could only be settled with blood.

The spirit of lying seemed to have taken possession of us. Thinking it would not be particularly acceptable to my pious friends to hear that I had been shooting in the tomb of Aaron,

I told Paul to say that we had shot at a partridge. Even before saluting the strangers, with a hurried voice and quivering lip, the sheik asked the cause of our firing; and when Paul told him, according to my instructions, that the cause was merely a simple bird, he was evidently relieved, although, unable to master his emotion, he muttered, "Cursed be the partridge, and cursed the gun, and cursed the hand that fired it." He then saluted our new companions, and all sat down around his long spear to smoke and drink coffee. I withdrew a little apart from them, and threw myself on the ground, and then began to suffer severely from a pain which, in my constant excitement since the cause of it occurred, I had not felt. The pistol which I had fired in the tomb had been charged by Paul with two balls, and powder enough for a musket; and in the firing it recoiled with such force as to lay open the back of my hand to the bone. While I was binding it up as well as I could, the sheik was taking care that I should not suffer from my withdrawal. I have mentioned Paul's lying humour, and my own tendency that way; but the sheik cast all our doings in the shade; and particularly, as if it had been concerted beforehand, he averred most solemnly, and with the most determined look of truth imaginable, that we had not been in Wady Moussa; that I was a Turk on a pilgrimage to Mount Hor; that when he was in Cairo waiting for the caravan of pilgrims, the Pacha sent the Habeeb Effendi to conduct him to the citadel,

whither he went, and found me sitting on the divan by the side of the Pacha; that the Pacha took me by the hand, told him that I was his (the Pacha's) particular friend, and that he, Sheik El Alouin, must conduct me first to Mount Hor, and then to Khalil or Hebron, and that he had given his head to Mohammed Aly for my safety. Paul was constantly moving between me and the group around the spear, and advising me of the progress of affairs; and when I heard who I was, and of my intimacy with the Pacha, thinking that it was not exactly the thing for the particular friend of the Viceroy of Egypt to be sprawling on the sand, I got up, and, for the credit of my friend, put myself rather more upon my dignity. We remained here half an hour, when, seeing that matters became no worse, I took it for granted that they were better; and, after moving about a little, I began to arrange the saddle of my horse; and, by and by, as a sort of declaration of independence, I told them that I would ride on slowly, and they could follow at their convenience. The sheik remained to settle with my new friends. They were a caravan belonging to the El Alouin tribe, from the tents at the mouth of the entrance to Petra, now on their way to Gaza; and the sheik got rid of them by paying them something, and assuring them that we had not been in Petra.

Early in the afternoon a favourite camel was taken sick, stumbled, and fell; and we turned aside among the mountains, where we were com-

pletely hidden from the view of any passing Bedouins. The camel belonged to a former female slave of the sheik, whom he had manumitted and married to "his black," and to whom he had given a tent and this camel as a dowry. He had been very anxious to get away as far as possible from Wady Moussa that night; but, as soon as the accident happened, with the expression always uppermost in the mouth of the followers of the Prophet, "God wills it," he began to doctor the animal. It was strange to be brought into such immediate contact with the disciples of fatalism. If we did not reach the point we were aiming at, God willed it; if it rained, God willed it; and I suppose that, if they had happened to lay their black hands upon my throat, and stripped me of everything I possessed, they would have piously raised their eyes to heaven, and cried, "God willed it." I remember Mr. Wolff,* the converted Jew missionary, told me an anecdote illustrating most strikingly the operation of this fatalist creed. He was in Aleppo during an earthquake, and saw two Turks smoking their pipes at the base of a house then tottering and ready to fall. He cried

* The Rev. Joseph Wolff is now in America, and has taken orders in the Episcopal Church there. When I left Egypt he had set out on his long-projected journey to Timbuctoo. He was taken sick in Abyssinia, and, unable to continue his progress, under great personal hardship and suffering, crossed the desert to the Red Sea, and went down to Bombay. It is greatly to be regretted that Mr. Wolff's health failed him. From his extensive travels in Asia and

out to them and warned them of their peril ; but they turned their eyes to the impending danger, and crying, "Allah el Allah," "God is merciful," were buried under the ruins.

It was not more than four o'clock when we pitched our tent. The Arabs all came under the shade to talk more at ease about our ascent of Mount Hor, and our adventure with the Bedouins of Wady Moussa ; and wishing to show them that we Christians conceived ourselves to have some rights and interests in Aaron, I read to them, and Paul explained, the verses in the Bible recording his death and burial on the mountain. They were astonished and confounded at finding anything about him in a book ; records of travel being entirely unknown to them, and books, therefore, regarded as of unquestionable veracity. The unbeliever of the previous night, however, was now as obstinate as if he had come from the banks of the Zuyder Zee. He still contended that the great high-priest of the Jews was a true follower of the Prophet ; and I at last accommodated the matter by allowing that he was not a Christian.

Africa, and his intimate knowledge of the languages and customs of the wild tribes that roam over their deserts, he was probably better qualified, and had a better chance of reaching that city, than any other man now living. It will probably be long before the attempt is made by another. Mr. Wolf has not, however, abandoned his purpose. As soon as his health will permit he intends to resume his journey, and, if the difficulties and dangers are not greater than man can overcome, we may yet hear from him in the heart of Africa.

That evening Paul and the sheik had a long and curious conversation. After supper, and over their pipes and coffee, the sheik asked him, as a brother, why we had come to that old city, Wady Moussa, so long a journey through the desert, spending so much money ; and when Paul told him it was to see the ruins, he took the pipe from his mouth, and said, " That will do very well before the world ; but, between ourselves, there is something else ;" and when Paul persisted in it, the sheik said to him, " Swear by your God that you do not come here to search for treasure ;" and when Paul had sworn by his God, the sheik rose, and, pointing to his brother as the very acme of honesty and truth, said, after a moment's hesitation, " Osman, I would not believe it if that brother had sworn it. No," he continued, " the Europeans are too cunning to spend their money in looking at old stones. I know there is treasure in Wady Moussa ; I have dug for it, and I mean to dig for it again ;" and then again he asked Paul whether he had discovered any, and where ; telling him that he would aid in removing it, without letting any of the rest of the tribe know anything of the matter.

CHAPTER VI.

Valley of El Ghor.—Prophecies against Edom.—The Sheik's Treachery.—An Explosion.—Personnel of the Arabs.—Amusing Retrospect.—Money Troubles.—Aspect of the Valley.—Death of a Camel.—The Desert Horses.—Native Salt.

EARLY in the morning we continued our descent down the mountain. Every turn was presenting us with a new view of wild, barren, and desolate scenery ; and yet frequently, in little spots watered by the mountain streams, we saw shrubs, and patches of green grass, and odoriferous bushes. At about nine o'clock we were again at the foot of the mountains of Seir, again moving along the great desert valley of El Ghor ; and again I saw, in imagination, at the extreme end of the valley, that mysterious sea which I had first looked upon from the summit of Mount Hor. I had spoken to the sheik before, and again I tried to prevail upon him to follow the valley directly to its shores ; but he told me, as before, that he had never travelled that road, and that the Bedouins (whom he had last night declared to be total strangers) were deadly enemies of his tribe ; in short, it was impossible to prevail upon him ; and, as I found afterward, it would have been phy-

sically impossible to proceed along the mountainous borders of the sea.

We pursued the route which I had originally contemplated through the land of Idumea. In regard to this part of my journey I wish to be particularly understood. Three different parties, at different times, and under different circumstances, after an interval of twenty years from its discovery by Burckhardt, had entered the city of Petra, but not one of them had passed through the land of Idumea. The route of the two Englishmen and Italian before referred to was not precisely known ; and, with the exception of these three, I was the first traveller who had ever attempted to pass through the doomed and blighted Edom. In very truth, the prophecy of Isaiah, "None shall pass through it for ever and ever," seemed in a state of literal fulfilment. And now, without considering that I was perhaps braving the malediction of Heaven, but stimulated by the interest of associations connected with the denounced region, and the excitement of travelling over a new and unbeaten track, I was again moving along the desert valley of El Ghor.

In the present state of the world, it is an unusual thing to travel a road over which hundreds have not passed before. Europe, Asia, and even the sands of Africa, have been overrun and trodden down by the feet of travellers ; but in the land of Idumea, the oldest country in the world, the aspect of everything is new and strange, and the very sands you tread on have never been

trodden by the feet of civilized human beings. The Bedouin roams over them like the Indian on our native prairies. The road along which the stranger journeys was far better known in the days of David and Solomon than it is now; and when he tires with the contemplation of barrenness and ruin, he may take the Bible in his hand, and read what Edom was, and how God, by the mouth of his prophets, cursed it; and see with his own eyes whether God's words be true. "Also Edom shall be a desolation; every one that goeth by it shall be astonished, and shall hiss at all the plagues thereof. As in the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, and the neighbouring cities thereof, saith the Lord, no man shall abide there, neither shall a son of man dwell in it. Therefore, hear the counsel of the Lord that he hath taken against Edom; and his purposes that he hath purposed against the inhabitants of Teman; surely the least of the flock shall draw them out; surely he shall make their habitations desolate with them. The earth is moved at the noise of their fall, at the cry, the noise thereof was heard in the Red Sea."* And again. "Thus saith the Lord God: Because that Edom hath dealt against the house of Judah by taking vengeance, and hath greatly offended, and revenged himself upon them; therefore, thus saith the Lord God, I will also stretch out mine hand upon Edom, and will cut off man and beast from it;

* Jeremiah xlix.

and I will make it desolate from Teman.”* “Edom shall be a desolate wilderness.”† “For three transgressions of Edom, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof.”‡ “Thus saith the Lord God concerning Edom: Behold, I have made thee small among the heathen: thou art greatly despised. The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee, thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, whose habitation is high; that saith in his heart, Who shall bring me down to the ground? Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the Lord. Shall I not in that day, saith the Lord, even destroy the wise men out of Edom, and understanding out of the mount of Esau? And thy mighty men, oh Teman, shall be dismayed, to the end that every one of the mount of Esau may be cut of by slaughter.”§

All that day the sheik was particularly disagreeable. He was constantly talking of the favourable circumstances under which I had seen Petra, the bad character of the Bedouins, his devotion to me, and the generosity of M. Laborde and Abdel Hag. Ever since we started, one of his standing subjects of conversation with Paul had been what he expected from me; and to-day he pressed him particularly, to learn how much money I had brought with me. In the

* Ezekiel xxv.


† Joel iii. 19.

‡ Amos i. 11.

§ Obadiah i.

evening he came to my tent. He was in the habit of coming in every evening ; and, though I did not like him, I was in the habit of talking with him ; and, according to the Arab custom, I always asked him to take a share of my meal. In general, appease the stomach, and you gain the heart of the Arab ; but the viscera of my sheik were of impenetrable toughness. They produced none of that delicious repose, that " peace on earth, and good-will towards all men " spirit, which comes over an honest man after dinner. " A child might play with me," said the good-hearted son of Erin, as he threw himself back in his chair after dinner ; but it was not so with my sheik. While he was eating my bread, he was plotting against me. I had smoked my pipe, and was lying on my mat reading, while a long conversation was going on between him and Paul, and my suspicions were aroused ; for, on the part of the sheik, it was carried on in a low whisper. Though he knew I could not understand a word, he had the indefinite fear that indicates a guilty intention ; and, as I looked up occasionally from my book, I saw his keen and cunning eyes turned towards me, and withdrawn as soon as they met mine. He remained there more than an hour, conversing in the same low whisper ; I, meanwhile, watching his looks from time to time ; and when he had gone I asked what it all meant. At first Paul hesitated, but finally said it was the old story about Abdel Hag's generosity, and what he expected from me ; for himself, the sheik ex-

pected at least two hundred and fifty dollars ; his brother would not expect so much ; but that he was on an entirely different footing from the men ; and he had concluded, by attempting to bribe Paul, to find out how much money I had with me, and how much I intended to give him ; and, in going out, had slipped a couple of pieces into Paul's hand as an earnest. I have not troubled the reader with the many petty difficulties I had with the sheik, nor the many little circumstances that were constantly occurring to irritate me against him. I had been several times worked up to such a pitch that it was difficult to keep within the bounds of prudence ; and I now broke through all restraints. From the beginning he had been exaggerating the danger of the road, and making a parade of devotion of the value of his services ; and only the last night I had been driven out of my tent by four enormous fires which he had built at the four corners, as he said, for the men to sleep by and keep guard. I could hardly restrain myself then ; but merely telling him that I would rather be robbed than roasted, I reserved myself for a better moment. The fact is, from the beginning I had been completely mistaken in my opinion touching the character of the chief of a powerful tribe of Bedouins. I had imagined him like the chief of a tribe of our own Indians, wild, savage, and lawless, but generous and true when he had once offered his protection : one who might rob or even murder,



but who would never descend to the meanness of trickery and falsehood.

I had been smothering my feelings of contempt through the whole journey ; but now I had seen Petra and Mount Hor, and it was a relief to have something to justify me in my own eyes in breaking through all restraint. I had caught him in the very act of baseness and villany, corrupting the faith of my servant ; bribing under my own eyes, and while eating my bread, the only man on whom I could rely at all : and the proof of his treason, the accursed gold, was before me. With a loud voice I called him back to the tent, and charged him with his baseness, reproaching him that I had come into the desert upon the faith of his promises, and he had endeavoured to corrupt my servant before my eyes ; I told him that he was false and faithless ; that I had before distrusted him, but that I now despised him, and would not give him a para till we got to Hebron, nor would I tell him how much I would give him then ; but that, if he would take himself off and leave me alone in the desert, I would pay him the price of his camels ; I assured him, that bad as he represented them, I did not believe there was a worse Arab in all his tribe than himself ; and finally, throwing open my trunk, I told him that I did not fear him or all his tribe ; that I had there a certain sum of money, which should belong to the man who should conduct me to Hebron, whoever he might be, and clothes which

would not suit an Arab's back ; but that I knew I was in his power ; but that, if they killed me, they could not get more than they could without it ; and added, turning my pistols in my belt, that they should not get it while I could defend it. All this, passing through an interpreter, had given me time to cool ; and, before coming to my grand climax, though still highly indignant, I was able to observe the effect of my words. At the first glance I saw that I had the vantage ground, and that the consciousness of being detected in his baseness had sealed his lips. I am inclined to think that he would have been disgraced in the eyes of his tribe if they had been acquainted with the circumstances ; for, instead of resenting my passionate language, he earnestly begged me to lower my voice, and frequently looked out of the tent to see if any of his companions were near. Keep cool is a good maxim, generally, in a man's walk through life, and it is particularly useful with the Bedouins in the desert ; but there are times when it is good to be in a passion, and this was one of them. Without attempting to resent what I said, even by word or look, he came up to me, kissed my hand, and swore that he would never mention the subject of bucksheesh again until we got to Hebron, and he did not. I retained my command over him through the whole journey, while he was constantly at my side, taking my horse, holding my stirrup, and in every way trying to make himself useful. I am not sure, however, but that, in his new character of a

sycophant, he was worse than before. A sycophant in civilized life, where the usages of society admit, and perhaps demand, a certain degree of unmeant civility, is the most contemptible thing that crawls; but in a wild Arab it was intolerable. I really despised him, and made no secret of it; and sometimes, rash and imprudent as was the bare thought, it was with the greatest difficulty that I could keep from giving him my foot. After he had gone out that night, Paul sewed twenty gold pieces in the collar of my jacket, and I left the rest of my money open in my trunk.

I have frequently been astonished at the entire absence of apprehension which accompanied me during the whole of this journey. I fortunately observed, at the very first, an intention of exaggerating its danger; and this and other little things carried me into the other extreme to such a degree, that perhaps my eyes were closed against the real dangers. Among all the pictures and descriptions of robbers and bandits that I have seen, I have never met with anything so unprepossessing as a party of Desert Arabs coming down upon the traveller on their dromedaries; but one soon gets over the effect of their dark and scowling visages; and, after becoming acquainted with their weapons and bodily strength, a man of ordinary vigour, well armed, feels no little confidence in himself among them. They are small in stature, under our middle size, and thin almost to emaciation. Indeed, the same degree of spareness in Europeans would be deemed the effect of illness or

starvation; but with them it seems to be a mere drying up of the fluids, or, as it were, an attraction between skin and bone, which prevents flesh from insinuating itself between. Their breast-bones stand out very prominently; their ribs are as distinctly perceptible as the bars of a gridiron, and their empty stomachs seem drawn up till they touch the back-bone; and their weapons, though ugly enough, are far from being formidable. The sheik was the only one of our party who carried pistols, and I do not believe they could have been discharged without picking the flints once or twice; the rest had swords and matchlock guns; the latter, of course, not to be fired without first striking a light, which is not the work of a moment; and although these inconvenient implements do well enough for contests with their brother Bedouins, the odds are very much against them when they have to do with a well-armed Frank; two pairs of good pistols and a double-barrelled gun would have been a match for all their matchlock muskets. Besides all this, one naturally feels a confidence in himself after being some time left to his own resources; a developement of capacities and energies which he is entirely unconscious of possessing, until he is placed in a situation to call them out. A man must have been in the Desert alone, and beyond the reach of help, where his voice can never reach the ears of his distant friends, with a strong and overwhelming sense that everything depends upon himself, his own coolness and discretion; and

such is the elasticity of the human character, that his spirit, instead of sinking and quailing as it would once have done under difficulties and dangers incomparably less, rises with the occasion; and as he draws his sash or tightens his sword belt, he stretches himself to his full length, and is prepared and ready for any emergency that may befall him. Indeed, now that I have returned to the peaceful occupations of civilized life, I often look back with a species of mirthful feeling upon my journey in the Desert as a strange and amusing episode in my life; and, when laying my head on my quiet pillow, I can hardly believe that, but a few months ago, I never slept without first placing my pistols carefully by my side, and never woke without putting forth my hand to ascertain that they were near and ready for instant use.

I had scarcely mounted the next morning before one of the men came up to me, and, telling me that he intended to return home, asked for his bucksheesh. I looked at the sheik, who was still sitting on the ground, enjoying a last sip of coffee, and apparently taking no notice of us, and it immediately occurred to me that this was another scheme of his to find out how much I intended to give. The idea had no sooner occurred to me than I determined to sustain the tone I had assumed the night before; and I therefore told the fellow that I should not pay any one a piaster until I arrived at Hebron. This occasioned a great clamour; the sheik still remained silent, but

all the others took up the matter, and I do not know how far it would have gone if I had persisted. I was the only one mounted; and, having given my answer, I turned my horse's head, and moved on a few paces, looking over my shoulder, however, to watch the effect; and when I saw them still standing, as if spellbound, in the unfinished act, one of mounting a dromedary, another of arranging the baggage, and all apparently undecided what to do, I reflected that no good could come from the deliberations of such men, and began to repent somewhat of the high tone I had assumed. I only wanted a good excuse to retrace my steps; and, after a moment's reflection, I laid hold of something plausible enough for immediate use. The man who wanted to return was rather a favourite with me—the same who had carried me on his shoulders up the stream in the entrance of Petra—and, returning suddenly, as if the thing had just occurred to me, I called him to me, and told him that, although I would not pay him for accompanying me on my journey, as it was not yet ended, still, for his extra services in Petra, I would not let him go home destitute;—that I loved him—by which I meant that I liked him, an expression that would have been entirely too cold for “the land of the East and the clime of the sun,” or, as I should rather say, for the extravagant and inflated style of the Arabs—that if the same thing had happened with any of the others, I would not have given him a para; and now he must understand that I only paid him for his ser-

vices in Petra. This seemed natural enough to the other Bedouins, for they all knew that this man and I had returned from the defile the best friends in the world, calling each other brother, &c. ; and, in the end, the whole affair turned out rather fortunately ; for, understanding me literally that I paid only for the day in Petra, although not understanding the rule of three as established in the books of arithmetic, they worked out the problem after their own fashion, " If one day gives so much, what will so many days give ?" and were exceeding satisfied with the result. Indeed, I believe I might at any time have stopped their mouths, and relieved myself from much annoyance, by promising them an extravagant sum on my arrival at Hebron ; but this I would not do. I had not, from the first, held out to them any extravagant expectations, nor would I do so then ; perhaps, after all, not so much from a stern sense of principle, as from having conceived a feeling of strong though smothered indignation and contempt for the sheik. Indeed, I should not have considered it safe to tell him what I intended to give him ; for I soon saw that the amount estimated by Mr. Gliddon and myself was very far from being sufficient to satisfy his own and his men's extravagant expectations. My apparent indifference perplexed the sheik, and he was sorely confounded by my valiant declaration, " There is my trunk : all that is in it is yours when we arrive at Hebron ; rob me or kill me, and you get no more ;" and, though he could not conceal his

eagerness and rapacity; he felt himself trammelled; and my plan was to prolong his indecision, and postpone our denouement until our arrival at Hebron. Still, it was very unpleasant to be travelling upon these terms with my protectors, and I was exceedingly glad when the journey was over.

We were again journeying along the valley in an oblique direction. In the afternoon we fell in with a caravan for Gaza. It may be that I wronged the sheik; but I had the idea that, whenever we saw strangers, his deep and hurried manner of pronouncing El Arab, his fixing himself in his saddle, poising his spear, and getting the caravan in order, frequently accompanying these movements with the cautioning words not to be afraid, that he would fight for me till death, were intended altogether for effect upon me. Whether he had any influence or not with the caravan for Gaza, I cannot say; but I know that I would have been glad to leave the wandering tribes of the land of Idumea, and go with my new companions to the ancient city of the Philistines. While we moved along together, Paul and myself got upon excellent terms with them, and consulted for a good while about asking them to take us under their escort. I have no doubt they would have done it willingly, for they were a fine, manly set of fellows; but we were deterred by the fear of involving them in a quarrel, if not a fight, with our own men.

The valley continued the same as before, pre-

senting sandy hillocks, thorn bushes, gullies, the dry beds of streams, and furnishing all the way incontestible evidence that it had once been covered with the waters of a river. To one travelling along that dreary road as a geologist, every step opens a new page in the great book of Nature ; carrying him back to the time when all was chaos, and darkness covered the face of the earth ; the impressions it conveys are of a confused mass of matter settling into " form and substance," the earth covered with a mighty deluge, the waters retiring, and leaving bare the mountains above him, and a rolling river at his feet ; and by the regular operation of natural causes, the river contracting and disappearing, and for thousands of years leaving its channel-bed dry. And again, he who, in the wonders around him, seeks the evidences of events recorded in the sacred volume, here finds them in the abundant tokens that the shower of fire and brimstone which descended upon the guilty cities of Sodom and Gomorrah stopped the course of the Jordan, and formed it into a pestilential lake, and left the dry bed of a river in the desolate valley in which he is journeying. This valley is part of the once populous land of Idumea ; in the days of Solomon, the great travelled highway by which he received the gold of Ophir for the temple ; and by which, in the days of imperial Rome, the wealth of India was brought to her doors.

About the middle of the day, as usual, the sheik rode ahead, and, striking his spear in the sand,

he had coffee prepared before we came up. While we were sitting around the spear, two of our camels so far forgot the calm dignity of their nature, and their staid, quiet habits, as to get into a fight ; and one of them, finding himself likely to come off second best, took to his heels, and the other after him ; they were baggage camels, one being charged with my boxes of provisions and housekeeping apparatus, and his movements indicated death to crockery. I will not go into particulars, for eggs, rice, macaroni, and lamp-oil make a bad mixture ; and though the race and fight between the loaded camels were rather ludicrous, the consequence was by no means a pleasant thing in the desert.

The next morning we had another camel scene ; for one of the combatants was stretched on the sand, his bed of death. The Bedouins had examined him, and satisfied that the hand of death was upon him, they left him to breathe his last alone. The camel is to the Arab a treasure above all price. He is the only animal by nature and constitution framed for the desert, for he alone can travel several days without eating or drinking. Every part of him is useful ; his milk is their drink, his flesh their food, and his hair supplies materials for their rude garments and tents. Besides this, the creature is domesticated with the Bedouin ; grows up in his tent, feeds from his hand, kneels down to receive his burden, and rises as if glad to carry his master, and, in short, is so much a part of a Bedouin's family, that often, in

speaking of himself, the Bedouin will say that he has so many wives, so many children, and so many camels. All these things considered, when this morning they knew that the camel must die, I expected, in a rough way, something like Sterne's picture of the old man and his ass. But I saw nothing of the kind ; they left him in the last stages of his struggle with the great enemy with as much indifference, I was going to say, as if he had been a brute ; and he was a brute ; but it was almost worth a passing tear to leave even a brute to die alone in the desert ; one that we knew, that had travelled with us, and formed part of our little world ; but the only lament the sheik made was, that they had lost twenty dollars, and we left him to die in the sand. I could almost have remained myself to close his eyes. The vultures were already hovering over him, and once I went back and drove them away ; but I have no doubt that, before the poor beast was dead, the horrid birds had picked out his eyes, and thrust their murderous beaks into his brain.

It was, as usual, a fine day. Since we left Akaba we had a continued succession of the most delightful weather I had ever experienced. I was, no doubt, peculiarly susceptible to the influence of weather. With a malady constantly hanging about me, if I drooped, a bright sun and an unclouded sky could at any time revive me ; and more than once, when I have risen flushed and feverish, and but little refreshed with sleep, the clear, pure air of the morning has given me a new

life. From dragging one leg slowly after the other, I have fairly jumped into the saddle, and my noble Arabian, in such cases, always completed what the fresh air of the morning had begun. Indeed, I felt then that I could not be too thankful for those two things, uncommonly fine weather and an uncommonly fine horse; and I considered that it was almost solely those two that sustained me on that journey. It is part of the historical account of the Bedouins' horses, that the mares are never sold. My sheik would have sold his soul for a price; and, as soon as he saw that I was pleased with my mare, he wanted to sell her to me; and it was singular and amusing, in chaffering for this animal, to mark how one of the habits of bargain-making, peculiar to the horse-jockey with us, existed in full force among the Arabs; he said that he did not want to sell her; that at Cairo he had been offered two hundred and fifty dollars, a new dress, and arms complete, and he would not sell her; but if *I* wanted her, there being nothing he would not do for me, &c., I might have her.

The sheik's was an extraordinary animal. The saddle had not been off her back for thirty days; and the sheik, himself a most restless creature, would dash off suddenly a dozen times a day, on a full run across the valley, up the sides of a mountain, round and round our caravan, with his long spear poised in the air, and his dress streaming in the wind; and when he returned and brought her to a walk at my side, the beautiful

animal would snort and paw the ground as if proud of what she had done, and anxious for another course. I could almost imagine I saw the ancient war-horse of Idumea, so finely described by Job—"His neck clothed with thunder. Canst thou make him afraid as a grasshopper? the glory of his nostrils is terrible. He paweth in the valley, and rejoiceth in his strength; he goeth on to meet the armed men. He mocketh at fear, and is not affrighted; neither turneth he back from the sword. The quiver rattleth against him, the glittering spear and the shield. He swalloweth the ground with fierceness and rage; neither believeth he that it is the sound of the trumpet. He saith among the trumpets, ha, ha; and he smelleth the battle afar off, the thunder of the captains, and the shouting."

Nothing showed the hardiness of these horses more than their drinking. Several times we came to deposits of rainwater left in the hollow of a rock, so foul and dirty that I would not have given it to a dog; and while their sides were white with foam, the sheik would take the bits out of their mouths, and sit down with the bridle in his hands, and let them drink their fill; and I could not help thinking that a regular-bred English groom, accustomed to insinuate a wet sponge in the mouth of a heated horse, would have been amazed and horrified at such a barbarian usage. These two horses were twelve and twenty years old respectively; and the former was more like a colt in playfulness and spirit, and the other like

a horse of ten with us ; and the sheik told me that he could count upon the services of both until they were thirty-five. Among all the recommendations of the Arabian horse, I know none greater than this ; I have known a man, from long habit, conceive a liking for a vicious jade that no one else would mount ; and one can imagine how warm must be the feeling, when, year after year, the best of his race is the companion of the wandering Arab, and the same animal may bear him from the time when he can first poise a spear until his aged frame can scarcely sustain itself in the saddle.

Before leaving the valley, we found in one of the gullies a large stone veined in that peculiar manner which I had noticed at Petra ; it had been washed down from the mountains of Wady Moussa, and the Arab told me that stone of the same kind was found nowhere else. Towards evening we had crossed the valley, and were at the foot of the mountains of Judea, in the direction of the southern extremity of the Dead Sea. That evening, I remember, I noticed a circumstance which called to my mind the wonderful accounts handed down to us by Strabo and other ancient historians, of large cities built of salt having stood at the southern extremity of the Dead Sea and the valley beyond. In the escapade of our runaway camels, bringing about the catastrophe which one of them had since expiated with his life, they had mingled together in horrible confusion, contrary to all the rules of art, so many discordant ingredients, that a great portion of my larder was

spoiled ; and, among other things, salt, almost as necessary to man as bread, had completely lost its savour. But the Bedouins, habituated to wanting almost everything, knew where to find all that their barren country could give ; and one of them leaving the tents for a few moments, returned with a small quantity that he had picked up for immediate use, being a cake or incrustation about as large as the head of a barrel ; and I afterward saw regular strata of it, and in large quantities, in the sides of the mountains.

CHAPTER VII.

The Road to Gaza. — Unknown Ruins. — A Misadventure. — Pastoral Bedouins. — A Flower of the Wilderness. — The Ravages of War. — Testimony of an Eyewitness.

WE started at six o'clock the next day, the morning rather cool, though clear and bracing; we were again among the mountains, and at about eleven a track scarcely distinguishable to my eye turned off to Gaza. To a traveller from such a country as ours, few of the little every-day wonders he is constantly noticing strike him more forcibly than the character of the great public roads in the East. He makes allowance for the natural wildness of the country, the impossibility of using wheel-carriages on the mountains, or horses in the desert as beasts of burden, but still he is surprised and disappointed. Here, for instance, was a road leading to the ancient city of Gaza, a regular caravan route for four thousand years, and yet so perfect in the wildness of nature, so undistinguishable in its appearance from other portions of the wilderness around, that a stranger would have passed the little opening in the rocks probably without noticing it, and certainly without imagining that the wild track, of which it formed the entrance, would conduct him to the birthplace

and ancient capital of David, and the holy city of Jerusalem. The solitary trail of the Indian over our prairies and forests is more perfectly marked as a road than either of the great routes to Gaza or Jerusalem, and yet, near the spot where these two roads diverge are the ruins of an ancient city.

Little, if anything, has been known in modern days concerning the existence and distinguishing features of this road; and it is completely a *terra incognita* to modern travellers. All the knowledge possessed of it is that derived from the records of ancient history; and from these we learn that in the time of David and Solomon, and the later days of the Roman empire, a great public road existed from Jerusalem to Akaba, the ancient Eloth or Ezion-geber; that several cities existed upon it between these terminating points, and that their ruins should still be visible. Believing that I am the first traveller who has ever seen those ruins, none can regret more than myself my inability to add to the scanty stock of knowledge already in possession of geographers. If my health had permitted, I might have investigated and explored, noted observations, and treasured up facts and circumstances, to place them in the hands of wiser men for their conclusions; but I was not equal to the task. The ruins which I saw were a confused and shapeless mass, and I rode among them without dismounting; there were no columns, no blocks of marble, or large stones which indicated any architectural greatness,

and the appearance of the ruins would answer the historical description of a third or fourth rate city.

About three hours farther on, and half a mile from our path, on the right, was a quadrangular arch with a dome; and near it was a low stone building, also arched, which might have been a small temple. The Bedouins, as usual, referred it to the times of the Christians. For about a mile, in different places on each side of us, were mounds of crumbling ruins; and directly on the caravan-track we came to a little elevation, where were two remarkable wells, of the very best Roman workmanship, about fifty feet deep, lined with large hard stones, as firm and perfect as on the day in which they were laid. The uppermost layer, round the top of the well, which was on a level with the pavement, was of marble, and had many grooves cut in it, apparently worn by the long-continued use of ropes in drawing water. Around each of the wells were circular ranges of columns, which, when the city existed, and the inhabitants came there to drink, might and probably did support a roof similar to those now seen over the fountains in Constantinople. No remains of such roof, however, are existing; and the columns are broken, several of them standing not more than three or four feet high, and the tops scooped out to serve as troughs for thirsty camels. On the other side, a little in the rear of the wells, is a hill overlooking the scattered ruins below, which may, some hundred years ago, have been

the Acropolis of the city. A strong wall seems to have extended around the whole summit level of the hill. I remember that I rode up to the summit, winding around the hill, and leaped my horse over the broken wall ; but there was nothing to reward me for the exertion of the undertaking. The enclosure formed by the wall was filled with ruins, but I could give form or feature to none of them ; here, too, I rode among them without dismounting ; and from here I could see the whole extent of the ruins below. As in the ruined city I had just passed, there was not a solitary inhabitant, and not a living being was to be seen but my companions watering their camels at the ancient wells. This, no doubt, was another of the Roman cities ; and although it was probably never celebrated for architectural or monumental beauty, it must have contained a large population.

We were now coming into another country, and leaving the desert behind us ; a scanty verdure was beginning to cover the mountains ; but the smiling prospect before me was for a moment overclouded by an unfortunate accident. Paul had lent his dromedary to one of the men ; and riding carelessly on a baggage-camel, in ascending a rough hill the girths of the saddle gave way, and Paul, boxes, and baggage, all came down together, the unlucky dragoman completely buried under the burden. I was the first at his side ; and when I raised him up he was senseless. I untied his sash and tore open his clothes. The Bedouins gathered around, all talking together,

pulling, and hauling, and one of them drew his sword, and was bending over my prostrate interpreter, with its point but a few inches from his throat. Poor Paul ! with his mortal antipathy to cold steel, if he could have opened his eyes at that moment, and seen the fiery orbs of the Bedouins, and the point of a sharp sword apparently just ready to be plunged into his body, he would have uttered one groan and given up the ghost. It was a startling movement to me ; and for a moment I thought they were going to employ in his behalf that mercy which is sometimes shown to a dying brute, that of killing him to put him out of misery. I pressed forward to shield him with my own body ; and in the confusion of the moment, and my inability to understand what they meant, the selfish feeling came over me of the entire and absolute helplessness of my own condition if Paul should die. But Paul was too good a Catholic to die out of the pale of the church ; he could never have rested quietly in his grave, unless he had been laid there amid the wafting of incense and the chanting of priests. “ The safety of the patient often consists in the quarrels of the physicians,” says Sancho Panza, or some other equally great authority, and perhaps this saved Paul ; the Arabs wanted to cut open his clothes and bleed him ; but I not liking the looks of their lancets, would not suffer it ; and, between us both, Paul was let alone and came to himself. But it was a trying moment, while I was kneeling on the sand supporting his senseless

head upon my knee. No parent could have waited with more anxiety the return to life of an only child, or lover watched the beautiful face of his adored and swooning mistress, with more earnestness than I did the ghastly and grizzled face of my faithful follower; and when he first opened his eyes, and stared wildly at me, the brightest emanations from the face of beauty could not at that moment have kindled warmer emotions in my heart. I never thought I should look on his ugly face with so much pleasure. I put him on my horse, and took his dromedary; and in half an hour we came to a Bedouin encampment in one of the most singular and interesting spots I ever saw.

We should have gone on two hours longer, but Paul's accident made it necessary to stop as soon as we found a proper place; and I should have regretted exceedingly to pass by this without a halt. There was something interesting even in our manner of approaching it. We were climbing up the side of a mountain, and saw on a little point on the very summit the figure of an Arab, with his face towards the tomb of the Prophet, kneeling and prostrating himself in evening prayer. He had finished his devotions, and was sitting upon the rock when we approached, and found that he had literally been praying on his house-top, for his habitation was in the rock beneath. Like almost every old man one meets in the East, he looked exactly the patriarch of the imagination, and precisely as we would paint Abraham, Isaac, or Jacob. He rose as we approached, and gave

us the usual Bedouin invitation to stop and pass the night with him ; and, leading us a few paces to the brink of the mountain, he showed us in the valley below the village of his tribe.

The valley began at the foot of the elevation on which we stood, and lay between ranges of broken and overhanging rocks, a smooth and beautiful table of green, for perhaps a quarter of a mile, and beyond that distance broke off and expanded into an extensive meadow. The whole of this valley, down to the meadow, was filled with flocks of sheep and goats ; and, for the first time since I left the banks of the Nile, I saw a herd of cows. I did not think I should ever be guilty of a sentiment at beholding a cow, but so it was ; after my long journey in the desert, my feelings were actually excited to tenderness by the sight of these old acquaintances.

But where were the dwellings of the pastors, the tents in which dwelt the shepherds of these flocks and herds ? In Egypt I had seen the Arabs living in tombs, and among the ruins of temples ; in the desert I had seen them dwelling in tents ; but I had never yet seen them making their habitations in the rude crevices of the rocks. Such, however, were their habitations here. The rocks in many places were overhanging ; in others there were chasms or fissures ; and wherever there was anything that could afford a partial protection from the weather on one side, a low, rough, circular wall of stone was built in front of it, and formed the abode of a large family. Within the

small enclosure in front, the women were sitting winnowing or grinding grain, or rather pounding and rubbing it between two stones, in the same primitive manner practised of old, in the days of the patriarchs. We descended and pitched our tents in the middle of the valley; and my first business was to make some hot tea for Paul, roll him up in blankets and coverlets, and thus repeat the sweating operation that had done him so much good before. He was badly hurt, and very much frightened. The boxes had fallen upon him, and the butt of a heavy gun, which he held in his left hand, had struck with all the momentum of its fall against his breast. He thought his ribs were all broken; and when I persuaded him that they were as good as ever, he was sure there was some inward bruise, that would be followed by mortification; and, until we separated, especially when we had any hard work before us, he continued to complain of his hurts by this unlucky misadventure.

Having disposed of Paul, I strode out to examine more particularly the strange and interesting scene in the midst of which we were. The habitations in the crevices of the rocks, bad as they would be considered anywhere else, I found much more comfortable than most of the huts of the Egyptians on the banks of the Nile, or the rude tents of the Bedouins. It was not sheer poverty that drove these shepherds to take shelter in the rocks, for they were a tribe more than three hundred strong, and had flocks and herds such as

are seldom seen among the Bedouins; and they were far better clad, and had the appearance of being better fed than my worthy companions. Indeed, they were a different race from mine; and here, on the borders of the desert, I was again struck with what had so forcibly impressed me in crossing the borders of Ethiopia, the strong and marked difference of races in the East. The Bedouins among whom we were encamped were taller, stouter, and had longer faces than the El Alouins; and sometimes I thought I saw in them strong marks of the Jewish physiognomy. Above all, they were whiter; and this, with the circumstance of the women being less particular in keeping their faces covered, enabled me to pass an hour before dark with much satisfaction. The change from the swarthy and bearded visages of my travelling companions to the comparatively fair and feminine countenances of these pastoral women was striking and agreeable, and they looked more like home than anything I had seen for a long time, except the cows. I cannot help thinking what a delight it would have been to meet, in that distant land, one of those beautiful fairies, lovely in all the bewitching attractions of frocks, shoes, stockings, clean faces, &c., of whom I now meet dozens every day, with the calm indifference of a stoic, since, even in spite of bare feet and dirty faces, my heart warmed towards the women of the desert. I could have taken them all to my arms; but there was one among them who might be accounted beautiful even among the beautiful women

of my own distant home. She was tall, and fairer than the most of her tribe; and, with the shepherd's crook in her hand, she was driving her flock of goats up the valley to the little enclosure before the door of her rocky dwelling. There was no colour in her cheek, but there was gentleness in her eye and delicacy in every feature; and, moving among us, she would be cherished and cared for as a tender plant, and served with all respect and love; but here she was a servant; her days were spent in guarding her flock, and at night her tender limbs were stretched upon the rude floor of her rocky dwelling. I thought of her much, and she made a deep impression upon me; but I was prevented from attempting to excite a correspondent feeling in her gentle bosom by the crushed state of Paul's ribs and my own inability to speak her language.

In the evening the men and women, or, to speak more pastorally, the shepherds and shepherdesses, came up one after another, with their crooks in their hands and their well-trained dogs, driving before them their several flocks. Some entered the little enclosures before their rude habitations; but many, destitute even of this miserable shelter, slept outside in the open valley, with their flocks around them, and their dogs by their side, presenting the same pastoral scenes which I had so often looked upon among the mountains of Greece; but unhappily, here, as there, the shepherds and shepherdesses do not in the least resemble the Chloes and Phyllises of poetic dreams. In the

evening we seated ourselves round a large bowl of cracked corn and milk, so thick as to be taken with the hands, unaided by a spoon or ladle, followed by a smoking marmite of stewed kid ; and, after this exercise of hospitality to the strangers, some withdrew to their rocky dwellings, others laid themselves down around the fire, and I retired to my tent. All night I heard from every part of the valley the lowing of cattle, the bleating of lambs and goats, and the loud barking of the watch-dog.

Early in the morning, while the stars were yet in the sky, I was up and out of my tent. The flocks were still quiet, and the shepherds and shepherdesses were still sleeping with the bare earth for their bed, and the canopy of heaven their only covering. One after the other they awoke ; and, as the day was breaking, they were milking the cows and goats, and at broad daylight they were again moving, with their crooks and dogs, to the pasture-ground at the foot of the valley.

We set off at an early hour, Paul again on my horse and I on his dromedary ; the patriarchal figure who had welcomed being the last to speed me on my way. At every step we were now putting the desert behind us, and advancing into a better country. We had spent our last night in the wilderness, and were now approaching the Holy Land ; and no pilgrim ever approached its borders with a more joyous and thankful heart than mine.

At nine o'clock we came to another field of ruins, where the relics of an Arab village were mingled with those of a Roman city. The hands of the different builders and residents were visible among them; two square buildings of large Roman stone were still standing like towers, while all the rest had fallen to pieces, and the stones which once formed the foundations of palaces were now worked up into fences around holes in the rocks, the burrowing-places of the miserable Arabs.

And here too we saw the tokens of man's inhumanity to man: the thunder of war had been levelled against the wretched village, the habitations were in ruins, and the inhabitants whom the sword had spared were driven out and scattered no one knew whither. On the borders of the Holy Land we saw that Ibrahim Pacha, the great Egyptian soldier, whose terrible war-cry had been heard on the plains of Egypt and among the mountains of Greece, in the deserts of Syria and under the walls of Constantinople, was ruling the conquered country with the same rod of iron which his father swayed in Egypt. He had lately been to this frontier village with the brand of war, and burning and desolation had marked his path.

Soon after we came to an inhabited village, the first since we left Cairo. Like the ruined and deserted village we had left, it was a mingled exhibition of ancient greatness and modern poverty; and probably it was a continuation of the same

ruined Roman city. A large fortress, forming part of a battlement, in good preservation, and fragments of a wall, formed the nucleus of a village, around which the inhabitants had built themselves huts. The rude artisans of the present day knew nothing of the works which their predecessors had built; and the only care they had for them was to pull them down, and with the fragments to build for themselves rude hovels and enclosures; and the sculptured stones which once formed the ornaments of Roman palaces were now worked up into fences around holes in the ground, the poor dwellings of the miserable Arabs.

The stranger from a more favoured land, in looking at the tenants of these wretched habitations, cannot help thanking his God that his lot is not like theirs. When I rode through, the whole population had crawled out of their holes and hiding-places, and were basking in the warmth of a summer's sun; and I could not help seeing the kindly hand of a benefactor in giving to them what he has denied to us, a climate where, for the greater part of the year, they may spend their whole days in the open air, and even at night hardly need the shelter of a roof. This is probably the last of the cities which once stood on the great Roman road from Jerusalem to Akaba. While riding among the ruins, and stopping for a moment to talk with some of the Arabs, I saw on the left, in the side of a mountain, an open door like those of the tombs in Egypt; a simple

orifice, without any ornament or sculpture. A woman was coming out with a child in her arms, a palpable indication that here, too, the ~~sh~~odes of the dead were used as habitations by the living. In Paul's disabled state I could ask no questions, and I did not stop to explore.

I cannot leave this interesting region without again expressing my regret at being able to add so little to the stock of useful knowledge. I can only testify to the existence of the ruins of cities which have been known only in the books of historians, and I can bear witness to the desolation that reigns in Edom. I can do more, not with the spirit of scoffing at prophecy, but of one who, in the strong evidence of the fulfilment of predictions uttered by the voice of inspiration, has seen and felt the evidences of the sure foundation of the Christian faith ; and having regard to what I have already said in reference to the interpretation of the prophecy, " None shall pass through it for ever and ever," I can say that I have passed *through* the land of Idumea. My route was not open to the objection made to that of Burckhardt, the traveller who came nearest to passing *through* the land ; for he entered from Damascus, on the east side of the Dead Sea, and struck the borders of Edom at such a point that literally he cannot be said to have passed through it. If the reader will look at the map accompanying these pages, he will see Burckhardt's route ; and he will also see that mine is not open to the critical objections made to his ; and that, beyond all peradventure,

I did pass directly through the land of Idumea lengthwise, and crossing its northern and southern border; and, unless the two Englishmen and Italian before referred to passed on this same route, I am the only person, except the wandering Arabs, who ever did pass through the doomed and forbidden Edom, beholding with his own eyes the fearful fulfilment of the terrible denunciations of an offended God. And, though I did pass through and yet was not cut off, God forbid that I should count the prophecy a lie: no; even though I had been a confirmed sceptic, I had seen enough, in wandering with the Bible in my hand in that unpeopled Desert, to tear up the very foundations of unbelief, and scatter its fragments to the winds. In my judgment, the words of the prophet are abundantly fulfilled in the destruction and desolation of the ancient Edom, and the complete and eternal breaking up of a great public highway; and it is neither necessary nor useful to extend the denunciation against a passing traveller.*

* Keith's celebrated treatise on the Prophecies has passed through fourteen editions, differing in some few particulars. In the sixth edition he says that Sir Frederick Henniker, in his notes dated from Mount Sinai, states that Seetzen, on a vessel of paper pasted against the wall, notifies his having penetrated the country in a direct line between the Dead Sea and Mount Sinai (through Idumea), *a route never before accomplished*. In a note to the same edition, the learned divine says, "Not even the cases of two individuals, Seetzen and Burckhardt, can be stated as at all opposed to the literal interpretation of the prophecies. Seetzen did indeed pass

through Idumea, and Burckhardt traversed a considerable part of it; but the former met his death not long after the completion of his journey through Idumea (he died at Akaba, supposed to have been poisoned); the latter never recovered from the effects of the hardships and privations which he suffered there; and, without even commencing the exclusive design which he had in view, viz. to explore the interior of Africa, to which all his journeyings in Asia were merely intended as preparatory, he died at Cairo. Neither of them lived to return to Europe. ‘*I will cut off from Mount Seir him that passeth out and him that returneth.*’” In the edition which I saw on the Nile, and which first turned my attention to the route through Idumea, I have no recollection of having seen any reference to Seetzen. It may have been there, however, without my particularly noticing it; as, when I read it, I had but little expectation of being able myself to undertake the route.

CHAPTER VIII.

Approach to Hebron. — A Sick Governor. — A Prescription at Random. — Hospitality of the Jews. — Finale with the Bedouins. — A storm. — A Calm after the Storm. — Venality of the Arabs. — Hebron. — A Coptic Christian. — Story of the Rabbi. — Professional Employment.

I HAD followed the wandering path of the children of Israel from the land of Egypt and the house of bondage to the borders of the Promised Land; had tracked them in their miraculous passage across the Red Sea to the mountains of Sinai, through “the great and terrible wilderness that leadeth to Kadesh Barnea;” and among the stony mountains through which I was now journeying must have been the Kadesh, in the wilderness of Paran, from which Moses sent the ten chosen men to spy out the land of Canaan, who went “unto the brook of Eshcol, and cut down from thence a branch with one cluster of grapes, and bare it between two upon a staff; and though they brought of the pomegranates and figs, and said that surely the land flowed with milk and honey, and these were the fruits thereof, yet brought up such an evil report of the land that it ate up the inhabitants thereof; and of the sons of Anak, the giants that dwelt therein, that the hearts of the Israelites sank within them; they murmured against Moses; and for their murmur-

ings they were sent back into the wilderness ; and their carcasses, from twenty years old and upward, were doomed to fall in the wilderness, and the children of the murmurers to wander forty years before they should enter the Land of Promise.* I followed in the track of the spies ; and, though I saw not the Vale of Eshcol with its grapes and pomegranates, neither did I see the sons of Anak, the giants which dwelt in the land. Indeed, the men of Anak could not have made me turn back from the Land of Promise. I was so heartily tired of the desert and my Bedouin companions, that I would have thrown myself into the arms of the giants themselves for relief. And though the mountains were as yet stony and barren, they were so green and beautiful by comparison with the desert I had left, that the conviction even of much greater dangers than I had yet encountered could hardly have driven me back. The Bedouins and the Fellahs about Hebron are regarded as the worst, most turbulent, and desperate Arabs under the government of the Pacha ; but as I met little parties of them coming out towards the frontier, they looked, if such a character can be conceived of Arabs, like quiet, respectable, orderly citizens, when compared with my wild protectors ; and they greeted us kindly and cordially as we passed them, and seemed to welcome us once more to the abodes of men.

As we approached Hebron the sheik became more and more civil and obsequious ; and, before we came

* Numbers xiii. 23.

in sight of the city, he seemed to have some misgivings about entering it, and asked me to secure protection from the governor for that night for himself and men, which I did not hesitate to promise. I was glad to be approaching again a place under the established government of the Pacha, where, capricious and despotic as was the exercise of power, I was sure of protection against the exactions of my Bedouins; and the reader may judge of the different degrees of security existing in these regions, from being told that I looked to the protection of a Turk as a guarantee against the rapacity of an Arab. After clambering over a rocky mountain, we came down into a valley, bounded on all sides, and apparently shut in by stony mountains. We followed the valley for more than an hour, finding the land good and well cultivated, with abundance of grapes, vines, and olives, as in the day when the spies sent by Moses entered it; and I can only wonder that, to a hardy and warlike people like the Israelites, after a long journey in the desert, the rich products of Hebron did not present more powerful considerations than the enmity of the men of Anak. We turned a point of the mountain to the left; and at the extreme end of the valley, on the side of a hill, bounding it, stands the little city of Hebron, the ancient capital of the kingdom of David: but it bears no traces of the glory of its Jewish king. Thunder and lightning, and earthquakes, wars, pestilence, and famine, have passed over it; and a small town of white houses, compactly built on

the side of the mountain, a mosque and two minarets, are all that mark the ancient city of Hebron. . As soon as we came in sight of the city the sheik dismounted, and, arranging his saddle, made Paul take back his dromedary and give me my horse; and placing me on his right hand, and drawing up the caravan with the order and precision of a troop of "regulars," we made a dashing entry. It was on Friday, the Mussulmans' Sabbath, and several hundred women, in long white dresses, were sitting among the tombs of the Turkish burying-ground, outside the walls. We passed this burying-ground, and a large square fountain connected with the ancient city, being regarded at this day as one of the works of Solomon, and leaving the baggage camels at the gate, with our horses and dromedaries on full gallop, we dashed through the narrow streets up to the door of the citadel, and, in no very modest tone, demanded an audience of the governor. The Turks and Arabs are proverbial for the indifference with which they look upon everything; and though I knew that a stranger coming from the desert was a rare object, and ought to excite some attention, I was amused, and somewhat surprised, at the extraordinary sensation our appearance created. Men stopped in the midst of their business; the lazy groups in the cafés sprang up; and workmen threw down their tools to run out and stare at us. I was surprised at this; but I afterward learned, that since the Pacha had disarmed all Syria, and his subjects in that part of

his dominions wore arms only by stealth, it was a strange and startling occurrence to see a party of lawless Bedouins coming in from the desert, armed to the teeth, and riding boldly up to the gates of the citadel.

The janizary at the door told us that the governor was sick and asleep, and could not be disturbed. He was, however, a blundering fellow ; and, after a few moments' parley, without giving his master any notice, he had us all standing over the sleeping invalid. The noise of our entering and the clang of our weapons roused him ; and staring round for a moment, leaning on his elbow, he fixed his eyes on the sheik, and with a voice the like of which can only issue from the bottom of a Turk's throat, thundered out, " Who are you ?" The sheik was for a moment confounded, and made no answer. " Who are you ?" reiterated the governor, in a voice even louder than before. " I am Ibrahim Pacha's man," said the sheik. " I know that," answered the governor ; " none but Ibrahim Pacha's men dare come here : but have you no name ?" " Sheik El Alouin," said the Arab, with the pride of a chief of Bedouins, and looking for a moment as if he stood in the desert at the head of his lawless tribe. " I conducted the Pacha's caravan to Akaba ;" and pointing to me, " I have conducted safe through all the bad Arabs, Abdel Hasis, the friend of the Pacha : " and then the governor, like a wild animal balked in his spring, turned his eyes from the sheik to me, as for the first time sensible of

my presence. I showed him my firman, and told him that I did not mean to give him much trouble; that all I wanted was, that he would send me on immediately to Bethlehem.

I had no wish to stop at Hebron, though the first city in the Holy Land, and hallowed by high and holy associations. The glory of the house of David had for ever departed. I was anxious to put an outpost between myself and the desert; and I had an indefinable longing to sleep my first night in the Holy Land in the city where Our Saviour was born. But the governor positively refused to let me go that afternoon; he said that it was a bad road, and that a Jew had been robbed a few days before on his way to Bethlehem: and again lying down, he silenced all objections with the eternal but hateful word, "Bokhara, bokhara," — "to-morrow, to-morrow." Seeing there was no help for me, I made the best of it, and asked him to furnish me with a place to lodge in that night. He immediately gave orders to the janizary; and, as I was rising to leave, asked me if I could not give him some medicine. I had some expectation and some fear of this, and would have avoided it if I could. I had often drugged and physicked a common Arab, but had never been called upon to prescribe for such pure porcelain of the earth as a governor. Nevertheless, I ventured my unskilful hand upon him; and having, with all due gravity, asked his symptoms, and felt his pulse, and made him stick out his tongue till he could hardly get it back,

again, I looked down his throat, and into his eyes, and covering him up, told him, with as much solemnity as if I was licensed to kill *secundum artem*, that I would send him some medicine, with the necessary directions for taking it. I was quite equal to the governor's case, for I saw that he had merely half killed himself with eating, and was suffering from repletion, and I had with me emetics and cathartics that I well knew would have sufficed for a whole regiment. In the course of the evening he sent his janizary to me; and, expecting to be off before daylight, I gave him a double emetic, with very precise directions for its use; and I afterward learned that, during its operation, his wrath had waxed warm against me, but in the morning he was so much better that he was ready to do me any kindness.

This over, I followed the janizary, who conducted me around outside the walls and through the burying-ground, where the women were scattered in groups among the tombs, to a distant and separate quarter of the city. I had no idea where he was taking me; but I had not advanced a horse's length in the narrow streets before their peculiar costume and physiognomies told me that I was among the unhappy remnant of a fallen people, the persecuted and despised Israelites. They were removed from the Turkish quarter, as if the slightest contact with this once-favoured people would contaminate the bigoted follower of the Prophet. The governor, in the haughty spirit of a Turk, probably thought that the house of

a Jew was a fit place for the repose of a Christian; and, following the janizary through a low range of narrow, dark, and filthy lanes, mountings and turnings, of which it is impossible to give any idea, with the whole Jewish population turning out to review us, and the sheik and all his attendants with their long swords clattering at my heels, I was conducted to the house of the chief Rabbi of Hebron.

If I had had my choice, these were the very persons I would have selected for my first acquaintances in the Holy Land. The descendants of Israel were fit persons to welcome a stranger to the ancient city of their fathers; and if they had been then sitting under the shadow of the throne of David, they could not have given me a warmer reception. It may be that, standing in the same relation to the Turks, alike the victims of persecution and contempt, they forgot the great cause which had torn us apart and made us a separate people, and felt only a sympathy for the object of mutual oppression. But, whatever was the cause, I shall never forget the kindness with which, as a stranger and Christian, I was received by the Jews in the capital of their ancient kingdom; and I look to my reception here and by the monks of Mount Sinai as among the few bright spots in my long and dreary pilgrimage through the desert.

I had seen enough of the desert, and of the wild spirit of freedom which men talk of without knowing, to make me cling more fondly than ever


even to the lowest grade of civilization ; and I could have sat down that night, provided it was under a roof, with the fiercest Mussulman, as in a family circle. Judge, then, of my satisfaction at being welcomed from the desert by the friendly and hospitable Israelites. Returned once more to the occupation of our busy, money-making life, floating again upon the stream of business, and carried away by the cares and anxieties which agitate every portion of our stirring community, it is refreshing to turn to the few brief moments when far other thoughts occupied my mind ; and my speculating, scheming friends and fellow-citizens would have smiled to see me that night, with a Syrian dress and long beard, sitting cross-legged on a divan with the chief Rabbi of the Jews at Hebron, and half the synagogue around us, talking of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as of old and mutual friends.

With the few moments of daylight that remained, my Jewish friends conducted me around their miserable quarter. They had few lions to show me, but they took me to their synagogue, in which an old white-bearded Israelite was teaching some prattling children to read the laws of Moses in the language of their fathers ; and when the sun was setting in the west, and the Muezzin from the top of the minaret was calling the sons of the faithful to evening prayers, the old Rabbi and myself, a Jew and a Christian, were sitting on the roof of the little synagogue, looking out as by stealth upon the sacred mosque containing the hallowed

ashes of their patriarch fathers. The Turk guards the door, and the Jew and the Christian are not permitted to enter ; and the old Rabbi was pointing to the different parts of the mosque, where, as he told me, under tombs adorned with carpets of silk and gold, rested the mortal remains of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

But to return to my Bedouin companions. The sheik and his whole suite had been following close at my heels, through the narrow lanes and streets, up to the very doors of the synagogue ; and their swarthy figures, their clattering swords, and grim visages prevented my seeing the face of many a Hebrew maiden. I expected a scene with them at parting, and I was not disappointed. Returning to the Rabbi's, they followed me into the room, and, after a few preliminaries, I counted out the price of the camels, and laid down a bucksheesh for each separately. Not one of them touched it, but all looked at the money and at me alternately, without speaking a word (it was about ten times as much as I would have had to pay for the same services anywhere else) ; and the sheik seemed uncertain what to do. The janizary, however, whose presence I had almost forgotten, put himself forward as an actor in the scene ; and, half drawing his sword, and rattling it back into its scabbard, swore that it was a vile extortion ; that the governor ought to know it ; and that the firman of the Pacha ought to protect a stranger. This brought the sheik to a decision ; and taking up his own portion, and directing the rest to do

the same, he expressed himself satisfied, and, without moving from his place, betook himself to smoking. It was evident, however, that he was not altogether content; and the janizary leaving us soon after, hardly had the rattling of his steel scabbard died away along the narrow passage, when they all turned upon me and gave voice to their dissatisfaction. I told them that I had paid them an enormous price, much more than the sheik had spoken of at Cairo; that I had brought with me more money than he had given me to understand would be necessary, and that it was all gone; that it was impossible to give them any more, for I had it not to give. In fact, I had paid them extravagantly, but far below their extravagant expectations. One would not have come for two hundred dollars, another for one hundred, &c.; and from the noise and clamour which they made here, I am well satisfied that, if the denouement had taken place in the desert, they would have searched for themselves whether there was not something left in the bottom of my trunk; and, from what happened afterward, I am very sure that they would have stripped me of my Turkish plumage; but now I was perfectly safe. I considered a Turkish governor good protection against the rapacity of a Bedouin Arab. I did not even fear their future vengeance, for I knew that they did not dare set their feet outside of any gate in Hebron, except that which opened to their own tents in the desert; they seemed to



think that they had let me slip through their fingers; and when they pushed me to desperation, I told them that I did not care whether they were satisfied or not. As I rose the sheik fell; and when I began working myself into a passion at his exorbitant demand, he fell to begging a dollar or two in such moving terms that I could not resist. I continued yielding to his petty extortions, until, having ascertained the expense, I found that I had not a dollar more than enough to carry me to Jerusalem; and at this moment he consummated his impudence by begging my dress from off my back. The dress was of no great value; it had not cost much when new, and was travel-worn and frayed with hard usage; but it had a value in my eyes from the mere circumstance of having been worn upon this journey. I had given him nearly all my tent equipage, arms, ammunition, &c., and I had borne with all his twopenny extortions; but he urged and insisted, and begged and entreated with so much pertinacity, that my patience was exhausted, and I told him that I had borne with him long enough, and that he and his whole tribe might go to the d—l. This was not very courteous or dignified between treaty-making powers; but, considering that the immediate subject of negotiation was an old silk dress, and the parties were a single individual and a horde of Bedouins, it may perhaps be allowed to pass. All the nice web of diplomacy was now broken; and all springing at the same moment to our feet, the whole

group stood fronting me, glaring upon me like so many wild beasts. Now the long-smothered passion broke out, and, wild and clamorous as the Arabs always were, I had never seen them so perfectly furious. They raved like so many bedlamites; and the sheik, with torrents of vociferation and reproach, drew from his bosom the money he had accepted as his portion, dashed it on the floor, and swearing that no Frank should ever pass through his country again, poured out upon me a volley of bitter curses, and, grinding his teeth with rage and disappointment, rushed out of the room. I did not then know what he was saying; but I could judge, from the almost diabolical expression of his face, that he was not paying me very handsome compliments! and I felt a convulsive movement about the extreme end of my foot, and had advanced a step to help him down stairs, but his troop followed him close; and I do not know how it is, but when one looks long at the ugly figure of a Bedouin, he is apt to forego a purpose of vengeance. There is something particularly truculent and pacifying in their aspect.

A moment after he had gone I was exceedingly sorry for what had happened, particularly on account of his oath, that no European should ever pass through his country. I felt unhappy in the idea that, when I expected to be the pioneer in opening a new and interesting route, I had become the means of more effectually closing it. With a heavy heart I told Paul that I must have another interview; that the old dress must go, and any-

thing else I had ; and, in short, that I must have peace upon any terms. To dispose of this business without mixing it with other things ; in about an hour the sheik returned with his brother, and, walking up to me and kissing my hand, told me that he had just heard of a robbery on the road to Jerusalem, and came to tell me of it ; and, looking me in the face, added that, when he had got back to his tent, he felt unhappy at having left me in anger ; that he had been so used to sitting with me, that he could not remain away, &c. &c. I was not to be outdone ; and, looking him back again in the face, I introduced him to my Jewish companions as my dearest friend, the chief of the tribe of El Alouins, who had protected me with his life through the dangers of the desert, and to whose bold arm they were indebted for the privilege they then enjoyed of seeing my face. The sheik looked at me as if he thought me in earnest, and himself entitled to all that I had said ; and, satisfied so far, he sat down and smoked his pipe, and at parting disclosed the object of his visit, by asking me for a letter of recommendation to the consul at Cairo, and to the friends of whom I had before spoken as intending to follow me to Petra. Glad to patch up a peace, I told him to come to me early the next morning, and I would settle everything to his satisfaction. Before I was awake he was shaking me by the shoulder. I jumped up, and roused Paul ; and now wishing to redeem my ungraciousness of the day before, I may say literally that “ I parted my raiment

among them," and gave away pretty much everything I had except my European clothes, completing my present with a double-barrelled gun, rather given to bursting, which I gave the sheik's brother. The sheik had changed his tone altogether, and now told me that he loved me as a brother : and, pointing to the brother at his side, that he loved me as well as him ; and with great warmth assured me, that if I would turn Mussulman, and come and live with him in his tents in the wilderness, he would give me for wives four of the most beautiful girls of his tribe. He did not confine his offers to me, but told me that he would receive, guard, and protect any of my friends as if they were of his own blood ; and warming with his own generosity, or perhaps really feeling a certain degree of kindness, he asked me for some symbol or sign which should be perpetual between us. I had just sealed a letter for Mr. Gliddon, and a stick of sealing-wax and a lighted lamp were on the low table before me. I made a huge plaster with the sealing-wax on a sheet of coarse brown paper, and, stamping it with the stock of my pistol, chased and carved in the Turkish fashion, I gave him a seal with such a device as would have puzzled the professors of heraldry, telling him that, when any one came to him with this seal, he might know he was a friend of mine ; and I added, that I would never send any one without plenty of money ; so that any one who visits the Sheik El Alouin with my recommendation must expect to make up for my

deficiencies. This over, we bade each other farewell, the sheik and the whole of his swarthy companions kissing me on both sides of my face. I looked after them as long as they continued in sight, listened till I heard the last clattering of their armour, and I never saw nor do I ever wish to see them again. I am sorry to entertain such a feeling towards any who have been the companions of my wanderings, and I hardly know another instance, from the English nobleman down to a muleteer or boatman, at parting with whom I have not felt a certain degree of regret. But when I parted with the Bedouin chief, though he kissed me on both cheeks, though he gave me his signet and has mine in return, and though four Arabian girls are ready for me whenever I choose to put my trust in Mohammed and Sheik El Alouin, it was delightful to think that I should never see his face again.

One by one I had seen the many illusions of my waking dreams fade away ; the gorgeous pictures of Oriental scenes melt into nothing ; but I had still clung to the primitive simplicity and purity of the children of the desert, their temperance and abstinence, their contented poverty and contempt for luxuries, as approaching the true nobility of man's nature, and sustaining the poetry of the "land of the East." But my last dream was broken ; and I never saw among the wanderers of the desert any traits of character or any habits of life which did not make me prize and value more the privileges of civilization. I had been

more than a month alone with the Bedouins ; and, to say nothing of their manners, excluding women from all companionship ; dipping their fingers up to the knuckles in the same dish ; eating sheep's insides, and sleeping under tents crawling with vermin engendered by their filthy habits, their temperance and frugality are from necessity, not from choice ; for in their nature they are gluttonous, and will eat at any time till they are gorged of whatever they can get, and then lie down and sleep like brutes. I have sometimes amused myself with trying the variety of their appetites, and I never knew them refuse anything that could be eaten. Their stomach was literally their god, and the only chance of doing anything with them was by first making to it a grateful offering ; instead of scorning luxuries, they would eat sugar as boys do sugarcandy ; and I am very sure, if they could have got poundcake, they would never have eaten their own coarse bread.

One might expect to find these children of Nature free from the reproach of civilized life, the love of gold. But, fellow-citizens and fellow-worshippers of mammon, hold up your heads ; this reproach must not be confined to you. It would have been a pleasing thing to me to find among the Arabs of the desert a slight similarity of taste and pursuits with the denizens of my native city ; and in the early developements of a thirst for acquisition, I would have hailed the embryo spirit which might one day lead to stock and exchange boards, and laying out city lots

around the base of Mount Sinai or the excavated city of Petra. But the savage was already far beyond the civilized man in his appetite for gold; and though brought up in a school of hungry and thirsty disciples, and knowing many in my native city who regard it as the one thing needful, I blush for myself, for my city, and for them, when I say that I never saw one among them who could be compared with the Bedouin. I never saw anything like the expression of face with which a Bedouin looks upon silver or gold. When he asks for bucksheesh and receives the glittering metal, his eyes sparkle with wild delight, his fingers clutch it with eager rapacity, and he skulks away like the miser, to count it over alone and hide it from all other eyes.

Hebron, one of the oldest cities of Canaan, is now a small Arab town, containing seven or eight hundred Arab families. The present inhabitants are the wildest, most lawless, and desperate people in the Holy Land; and it is a singular fact, that they sustain now the same mutinous character with the rebels of ancient days who armed with David against Saul, and with Absalom against David; in the late desperate revolution against Mohammed Aly they were foremost in the strife, the first to draw the sword, and the last to return it to its scabbard. A petty Turk now wields the sceptre of the son of Jesse, and a small remnant of a despised and persecuted people still hover round the graves of their fathers; and though degraded and trampled under foot, from the very

dust in which they lie are still looking to the restoration of their temporal kingdom.

Accompanied by my Jewish friends, I visited the few spots which tradition marks as connected with scenes of Bible History. Passing through the bazaars at the extreme end, and descending a few steps, we entered a vault containing a large monument, intended in memory of Abner, the greatest captain of his age, the favoured and for a long time trusted officer of David, who, as the Jews told me, was killed in battle near Hebron, and his body brought here and buried. The great mosque, the walls of which, the Jews say, are built with the ruins of the temple of Solomon, according to the belief of the Mussulmans and the better authority of the Jews, covers the site of the Cave of Machpelah, which Abraham bought from Ephron the Hittite; and within its sacred precincts are the supposed tombs of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The doors were guarded with jealous care by the bigoted Mussulmans; and when, with my Jewish companion, I stopped for a moment to look up at the long marble staircase leading to the tomb of Abraham, a Turk came out from the bazaars, and, with furious gesticulations, gathered a crowd around us; and a Jew and a Christian were driven with contempt from the sepulchre of the patriarch whom they both revered. A special firman from the Pacha, or perhaps a large bribe to the governor, might have procured me a private admission; but death or

the Koran would have been the penalty required by the bigoted people of Hebron.

On a rising ground a little beyond the mosque is a large fountain or reservoir, supported by marble pillars, where my companions told me that Sarah had washed the clothes of Abraham and Isaac. Leaving this, I went once more to the two pools outside the walls, and after examining them as the so called works of Solomon, I had seen all a stranger could see in Hebron.

I cannot leave this place, however, without a word or two more. I had spent a long evening with my Jewish friends. The old rabbi talked to me of their prospects and condition, and told me how he had left his country in Europe many years before, and come with his wife and children to lay their bones in the Holy Land. He was now eighty years old ; and for thirty years, he said, he had lived with the sword suspended over his head ; had been reviled, buffeted, and spit upon ; and, though sometimes enjoying a respite from persecution, he never knew at what moment the bloodhounds might not be let loose upon him ; that, since the country had been wrested from the Sultan by the Pacha of Egypt, they had been comparatively safe and tranquil ; though some idea may be formed of this comparative security from the fact that, during the revolution two years before, when Ibrahim Pacha, after having been pent up several months in Jerusalem, burst out like a roaring lion, the first place upon which his

wrath descended was the unhappy Hebron ; and while their guilty brethren were sometimes spared, the unhappy Jews, never offending but always suffering, received the full weight of Arab vengeance. Their houses were ransacked and plundered ; their gold and silver, and all things valuable, carried away ; and their wives and daughters violated before their eyes by a brutal soldiery.

During the evening a fine portly man, in the flowing Syrian dress, came to pay me a visit. His complexion proclaimed him of Coptic origin, a descendant of the ancient lords of Egypt ; his ink-horn in his sash told me that he was a writer, and his cordial salutation that he was a Christian. Living among Turks, Arabs, and Jews, he greeted me as if it were a rare thing to meet a professor of the same faith, and a believer in the same God and Saviour. He regretted that he had been away when I arrived, and said that he ought by right to have had me at his house, as he was the only Christian in Hebron ; and he, even where proselytes were wanted, would perhaps not have passed muster according to the strict canons of a Catholic church. My Christian friend, however, was more of a Jew than any of the descendants of Israel around me ; for, amid professions of friendship and offers of service, he was not forgetting his own interests. The European and American governments had been appointing consular agents in many of the cities of Syria, and this office, under the government of the present Pacha, exempted the holder from certain taxes and imposi-

tions to which the fellahs and rayahs were subject. America is known in the Holy Land by her missionaries by the great ship (the Delaware) which, a year before, touched at the seaport towns, and by the respect and character which she confers on her consular agents. Mr. Coptic Christian knew her on the last account, and told me, in confidence, that he thought America had need of a consular agent in Hebron, to protect her citizens travelling in that region. I was the first American traveller who had ever been there, and years may roll by before another follows me ; but I fully concurred with him in the necessity of such an officer ; and when he suggested that there was no better man than himself to hold it, I concurred with him again. Little did I think when, years before, I was seeking to climb the slippery rungs of the political ladder, that my political influence would ever be sought for the office of consul in the ancient capital of David ; but so it was ; and, without questioning him too closely about his faith in the principles and usages of the democratic party, the virtue of regular nominations, &c., taking his name written in Arabic, and giving him my card that he might know the name of his political benefactor, I promised to speak to the consul at Beyroot in his favour ; and he left me with as much confidence as if he had his commission already in his pocket.

A more interesting business followed with the old Rabbi, probably induced by what had just passed between the Christian and myself. He

told me that he had lately had occasion to regret exceedingly the loss of a paper, which would now be of great use to him ; that he was a Jew of Venice (I can vouch for it that he was no Shylock), and thirty years before had left his native city and come to Hebron with a regular passport ; that for many years a European passport was no protection, and, indeed, it had been rather an object with him to lay aside the European character, and identify himself with the Asiatics ; that, in consequence, he had been careless of his passport, and had lost it ; but that now, since the conquest of Mohammed Aly and the government of Ibrahim Pacha, a European passport was respected, and saved its holder and his family from Turkish impositions. He mourned bitterly over his loss, not, as he said, for himself, for his days were almost ended, and the storms of life could not break over his head more heavily than they had already done ; but he mourned for his children and grandchildren, whom his carelessness had deprived of the evidence of their birthright and the protection of their country. I was interested in the old man's story, and particularly in his unobtrusive manner of telling it ; and drawing upon the reminiscences of my legal knowledge, I told him that the loss of his passport had not deprived him of his right to the protection of his country, and that, if he could establish the fact of his being a native of Venice, he might still sit down under the wings of the double-headed eagle of Austria. I afterward

went more into detail. Learning that there were in Hebron some of his very old acquaintances, who could testify to the fact of his nativity, I told him to bring them to me, and I would take their affidavits, and, on my arrival at Beyroot, would represent the matter to the Austrian consul there; and I thought that with such evidence the consul would not refuse him another passport. He thanked me very warmly, and the next morning early, while I was waiting, all ready for my departure, he brought in his witnesses. It would have been difficult for the old man to produce deponents who could swear positively to his nativity; but of those whom he brought any one could look back farther than it is usually allowed to man. They were all over sixty, and their long white beards gave them a venerable appearance, which made me attach more importance to the proceedings than I intended. These hoary-headed men, I thought, could not speak with lying lips; and, taking my place in the middle of the floor, the witnesses seated themselves before me, and I prepared, with business-like formality, to examine them and reduce their examination to writing. Since I left home I had rarely thought of anything connected with my professional pursuits, and I could but smile as I found myself seated in the middle of a floor, surrounded by a crowd of Israelites in the old city of Hebron, for the first time in more than eighteen months resuming the path of my daily walks at home. I placed the scribe before me, and with a little of

the keenness of the hunter returning to a track for some time lost, I examined the witnesses severally, and dictated in good set form the several requisite affidavits ; and then reading them over distinctly, like a commissioner authorized to take acknowledgments under the act, &c., I swore the white-bearded old men upon the table of their law, a Hebrew copy of the Old Testament. I then dictated an affidavit for the Rabbi himself, and was about administering the oath as before, when the old man rose, and taking the paper in his hand, and telling me to follow him, led the way through a range of narrow lanes and streets, and a crowd of people, to the little synagogue, where, opening the holy of holies, and laying his hand upon the sacred scroll, he read over the affidavit and solemnly swore to its truth. It did not need this additional act of solemnity to convince me of its truth ; and when he gave me back the paper, and I saw the earnestness and deep interest depicted in the faces of the crowd that had followed us, I again resolved that I would use my best exertions to gladden once more the old man's heart before he died. I added to the several affidavits a brief statement of the circumstances under which they had been taken, and, putting the paper in my pocket, returned to the house of the Rabbi ; and I may as well mention here, that at Beyroot I called upon the Austrian consul, and before I left had the satisfaction of receiving from him the assurance that the pass-

port should be made out forthwith, and delivered to the agent whom the old Rabbi had named to me.

I had nothing now to detain me in Hebron ; my mules and a kervash provided by the governor were waiting for me, and I bade farewell to my Jewish friends. I could not offer to pay the old Rabbi with money for his hospitality, and would have satisfied my conscience by a compliment to the servants ; but the son of the good old man, himself more than sixty, told Paul that they would all feel hurt if I urged it. I did not urge it ; and the thought passed rapidly through my mind, that while yesterday the children of the desert would have stripped me of my last farthing, to-day a Jew would not take from me a para. I passed through the dark and narrow lanes of the Jewish Quarter, the inhabitants being all arranged before their houses ; and all along, even from the lips of maidens, a farewell salutation fell upon my ears. They did not know what I had done or what I proposed to do ; but they knew that I intended a kindness to a father of their tribe, and they thanked me as if that kindness were already done. With the last of their kind greetings still lingering on my ears, I emerged from the Jewish Quarter, and it was with a warm feeling of thankfulness I felt, that if yesterday I had an Arab's curse, to-day I had a Jewish blessing.

CHAPTER IX.

An Arnaout.—The Pools of Solomon.—Bethlehem.—The Empress Helena.—A Clerical Exquisite.—Miraculous Localities.—A Boon Companion.—The Soldier's Sleep.—The Birthplace of Christ.—Worship in the Grotto.—Moslem Fidelity.

I HAD given away all my superfluous baggage, and commenced my journey in the Holy Land with three mules, one for myself, another for Paul, and the third for my baggage. The muleteer, who was an uncommonly thriving-looking, well-dressed man, rode upon a donkey, and had an assistant, who accompanied on foot; but by far the most important person of our party was our kervash. He was a wild Arnaout, of a race that had for centuries furnished the bravest, fiercest, and most terrible soldiers in the army of the Sultan; and he himself was one of the wildest of that wild tribe. He was now about forty, and had been a warrior from his youth upward, and battles and bloodshed were familiar to him as his food; he had fought under Ibrahim Pacha in his bloody campaign in Greece, and his rebellious war against the Sultan; and having been wounded in the great battle in which the Egyptian

soldiers defeated the grand vizier with the flower of the Sultan's army, he had been removed from the regular service, and placed in an honourable position near the governor of Hebron. He was above the middle height, armed like the bristling porcupine, with pistols, a Damascus sabre, and a Turkish gun slung over his back, all which he carried as lightly and easily as a sportsman does his fowling-piece. His face was red, a burnt or baked red; his mustaches seemed to curl spontaneously, as if in contempt of dangers; and he rode his high-mettled horse as if he were himself a part of the noble animal. Altogether he was the boldest, most dashing, and martial-looking figure I ever saw; and had a frankness and openness in his countenance which, after the dark and sinister looks of my Bedouins, made me take to him the moment I saw him. I do not think I made as favourable an impression upon him at first; for almost the first words he spoke to Paul after starting were to express his astonishment at my not drinking wine. The janizary must have told him this as he sat by me at supper, though I did not think he was watching me so closely. I soon succeeded, however, in establishing myself on a good footing with my kervash, and learned that his reading of the Koran did not forbid the wine-cup to the followers of the Prophet. He admitted that the Sultan, as being of the blood of the Prophet, and the vicegerent of God upon earth, ought not to taste it; but as to the Pacha of Egypt, he drank good wine whenever he could

get it, and this gave *his* subjects a right to drink as often as they pleased.

We were interrupted by an Arab, who told us that a party of soldiers had just caught two robbers. The kervash pricked up his ears at this, and, telling us that he would meet us at a place some distance farther on, he drove his heavy stirrups into his horse's sides, and, dashing up the hill at full gallop, was out of sight in an instant. I did not think it exactly the thing to leave us the first moment we heard of robbers; but I saw that his fiery impatience to be present at a scene could not be controlled; and I felt well assured that if danger should arrive, we would soon find him at our side. Soon after we found him waiting with the party he had sought, — the two robbers chained together; and, probably, long before this, they have expiated their crime with their lives. He told us that from Hebron to Jerusalem was the most unsafe road in the Holy Land; and that Ibrahim Pacha, who hated the Arabs in that vicinity, was determined to clear it of rebels and robbers, if he cut off every man in the country.

About half an hour from Hebron we came to a valley, supposed to be the Vale of Eshcol, where the spies sent out by Moses found the grapes so heavy, that to carry one bunch it was necessary to suspend it on a pole. On the right we passed a ruined wall, by some called the Cave of Machpelah, or sepulchre of the patriarchs, but which the Jews at Hebron had called the House of Abraham.

We were on our way to Bethlehem. I had hired my mules for Jerusalem, expecting merely to stop at Bethlehem and push on to Jerusalem that night. The road between these oldest of cities was simply a mule-path over rocky mountains, descending occasionally into rich valleys. We had already, on this our first journey in the Holy Land, found that the character given of it in the Bible is true at this day, and that the Land of Promise is not like the land of Egypt, watered by the dews of heaven, but by copious and abundant rains. Indeed, the rain was falling in torrents; our clothes were already dripping wet, but we did not mind it, for we were too full of thankfulness that continued sunshine and clear and unclouded skies had been our portion, when we most needed them, in the desert.

The heavy fall of rain made the track slippery and precarious; and it was four hours before we reached the celebrated reservoirs, known to modern travellers under the name of the Pools of Solomon. These large, strong, noble structures, in a land where every work of art has been hurried to destruction, remain now almost as perfect as when they were built. There are three of them, about four hundred and eighty, six hundred, and six hundred and sixty feet in length, and two hundred and eighty in breadth, and of different altitudes, the water from the first running into the second, and from the second into the third. At about a hundred yards' distance is the spring which supplies the reservoirs, — as the

monks say, the sealed fountain referred to in Canticles iv. 12. The water from these reservoirs is conveyed to Jerusalem by a small aqueduct, a round earthen pipe about ten inches in diameter, which follows all the sinuosities of the ground, being sometimes above the surface and sometimes under. It is easily broken; and while I was in Jerusalem an accident happened which entirely cut off the water from their pools.

There is every reason to believe that these pools have existed from the date assigned to them; and that this was the site of one of King Solomon's houses of pleasure, where he made himself "gardens, and orchards, and pools of water." The rain here ceased for a few moments, and enabled me to view them at my leisure; and as I walked along the bank, or stood on the margin, or descended the steps to the water's edge, it seemed almost the wild suggestion of a dream to imagine that the wisest of men had looked into the same pool, had strolled along the same bank, and stood on the very same steps. It was like annihilating all the intervals of time and space. Solomon and all his glory are departed; and little could even his wisdom have foreseen that, long after he should be laid in the dust, and his kingdom had passed into the hands of strangers, a traveller from a land he never dreamed of would be looking upon his works, and murmuring to himself the words of the Preacher, "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity."

A little to the right of the pools, towards the

region of the Dead Sea, is a very large grotto, supported by great pillars of the natural rock, perfectly dry, without petrification or stalactites: it is a perfect labyrinth within, and, as in many of the ancient catacombs, a man might easily lose himself for ever in its windings. It lies in the mountainous wilderness of Engaddi, and is supposed to be the Cave of Adullam, where David received the mutinous and discontented spirits of his days, and where, when Saul was in pursuit of him, he cut off the skirts of his garment, and suffered him to go away unharmed.

In an hour more we came in sight of Bethlehem, seated on an elevation, a confused and irregular pile of white buildings. The star of the east no longer hovers over it to mark the spot where the Saviour was born; and the mosque and the minaret proclaim the birth-place of Christ under the dominion of a people who reject and despise him.

Heaps of ruins and houses blackened with smoke show that the hand of war has been there. Ibrahim Pacha, on his sortie from Jerusalem, and on his way to Hebron, had lingered on his path of destruction long enough to lay in ruins half the little city of Bethlehem. It is a singular fact, and exhibits a liberality elsewhere unknown in the history of the Turks or of the Mussulman religion, that the height of his indignation fell upon the Arabs. He spared the Christians for a reason that never before operated with a Turk, — because they had not offended. He did, too,

another liberal thing, saying that Christians and Mussulmans could not live together in unity ; he drove out from Bethlehem the Arabs whom the sword had spared, and left the place consecrated by the birth of Christ in the exclusive possession of his followers. True, he stained this act of clemency or policy by arbitrarily taking away thirty Christian boys, whom he sent to work at the factories in Cairo ; and the simple-hearted parents, hearing that I had come from that city, asked me if I had seen their children.

It is a happy thing for the traveller in the Holy Land, that in almost all the principal places there is a Christian convent, whose doors are always open to him ; and one of the largest and finest of these is in Bethlehem. Riding through the whole extent of the little town, greeted by Christians, who, however, with their white turbans and fierce mustaches and beards, had, in my eyes, a most unchristian appearance, and stopping for a moment on the high plain in front, overlooking the valley, and the sides of the hill all cultivated in terraces, we dismounted at the door of the convent.

Beginning my tour in the Holy Land at the birthplace of our Saviour, and about to follow him in his wanderings through Judea, Samaria, and Galilee, over the ground consecrated by his preaching, his sufferings, and miracles, to his crucifixion on Calvary, I must prepare my readers for a disappointment which I experienced myself. The immediate followers of our Saviour, who personally knew the localities which are now guarded

and revered as holy places, engrossed by the more important business of their Master's mission, never marked these places for the knowledge of their descendants. Neglected for several centuries, many of them were probably entirely unknown, when a new spirit arose in the East, and the minds of the Christians were inflamed with a passion for collecting holy relics, and for making pilgrimages to the places consecrated by the acts and sufferings of our Redeemer and his disciples; and the Empress Helena, the mother of Constantine, the first Christian Empress, came as a crusader into the Holy Land, to search for and determine the then unknown localities. And the traveller is often astonished that, with so little to guide her, she was so successful; for she not only found all the holy places mentioned in the Bible, but many more; and the piety of Christians will never forget that it was through her indefatigable exertions the true cross was drawn from the bottom of a dark pit, and is now scattered in pieces all over the world, to gladden the hearts of believers. It may be that the earnest piety of the empress sometimes deceived her; but then she always covered a doubtful place with a handsomer monument, upon much the same principle that a jockey praises a bad horse and says nothing of a good one, because the bad one wants praising, and the good one can speak for himself. Besides, the worthy empress seemed to think that a little marble could not hurt a holy place, and a good deal might help to make holy what was not so without

it ; and so think most of the Christian pilgrims, for I have observed that they always kiss with more devotion the polished marble than the rude stone.

But the Christian who goes animated by the fresh, I may almost say virgin feeling, awakened by the perusal of his Bible, expecting to see in Bethlehem the stable in which our Saviour was born and the manger in which he was cradled, or in Jerusalem the tomb hewn out of the rock wherein his crucified body was buried, will feel another added to the many grievous disappointments of a traveller, when he finds these hallowed objects, or at least what are pointed out as these, covered and enclosed with party-coloured marble, and bedecked with gaudy and inappropriate ornaments, as if intentionally and impiously to destroy all resemblance to the descriptions given in the sacred book.

I had intended going on to Jerusalem that afternoon ; but the rain had retarded me so much, that, as soon as I saw the interior of the convent, I determined to remain all night. My muleteer insisted upon proceeding, as I had arranged with him when I engaged him ; but my kervash silenced him by a rap over the back with the flat of his sword, and he went off on his donkey alone, leaving behind him his companion and his mules.

Entering by the small door of the convent, I heard in the distance the loud pealing of an organ and the solemn chant of the monks ; the sound transported me at once to scenes that were familiar and almost homelike, the churches and ca-

thedrals in Italy; and the appearance of one of the brothers, in the long brown habit of the Capuchins, with his shaved head and sandals on his feet, made me feel for the moment as if I were in Europe. The monks were then at prayers; and following him through the great church, down a marble staircase, and along a subterranean corridor, in five minutes after my arrival in Bethlehem I was standing on the spot where the Saviour of mankind was born.


The superior was a young man, not more than thirty, with a face and figure of uncommon beauty; though not unhealthy, his face was thin and pale, and his high, projecting forehead indicated more than talent. Genius flashed from his eyes, though, so far as I could judge from his conversation, he did not sustain the character his features and expression promised. He was not insensible to the advantages of his personal appearance. The rope around his waist, with the cross dangling at the end, was laid as neatly as a soldier's sword-belt; the top of his head was shaved, his beard combed, and the folds of his long coarse dress, his cowl, and the sandals on his feet, all were arranged with a precision that, under other circumstances, would have made him a Brummel. There was something, too, in the display of a small hand and long taper fingers that savoured more of the exquisite than of the recluse; but I ought not to have noted him too critically, for he was young, handsome, and gentlemanly, and fit for better things than the dronish life of a convent. I am inclined to believe,

too, that he sometimes thought of other things than his breviary and his missal ; at all events, he was not particularly familiar with Bible history ; for, in answer to his question as to the route by which I had come, I told him that I had passed through the land of Idumea ; and when I expected to see him open his eyes with wonder, I found that he did not know where the land of Idumea was. I remember that he got down a huge volume in Latin, written by saint somebody, and we pored over it together until our attention was drawn off by something else, and we forgot what we were looking for.

The walls of the convent contain all that is most interesting in Bethlehem ; but outside the walls also are places consecrated in Bible history, and which the pilgrim to Bethlehem, in spite of doubts and confusion, will look upon with exceeding interest. Standing on the high table of ground in front of the convent, one of the monks pointed out the fountain where, when David was thirsting, his young men procured him water ; and in the rear of the convent is a beautiful valley, having in the midst of it a ruined village, marking the place where the shepherds were watching their flocks at night when the angel came down and announced to them the birth of the Saviour. The scene was as pastoral as it had been eighteen hundred years before ; the sun was going down, the shepherds were gathering their flocks together, and one could almost imagine that, with the approach of evening, they were preparing to receive another visiter from on high.

In the distance beyond the valley is a long range of mountains enclosing the Dead Sea, and among them was the wilderness of Engaddi; and the monk pointed out a small opening as leading to the shores of the sea, at the precise spot where Lot's wife was turned into a pillar of salt.

Mixed with these references to Bible history were idle legends of later days, connected with places to which the monk conducted me with as much solemnity as he had displayed when indicating the holy places of Scripture. In a grotto cut out of the rock is a chapel dedicated to the Virgin; and he told me that the mother of Christ had here concealed herself from Herod, and nursed the infant Jesus forty days, before she escaped into Egypt. Near this is another grotto, in which the Virgin, going to visit a neighbour with the child in her arms, took refuge from a shower, and her milk overflowed; and now, said the monk, there is a faith among all people, Turks, Greeks, and Armenians, that if a woman to whom Nature has denied the power of nursing her child comes to this grotto and prays before the altar, the fountain of life will be opened to her. Nor was the virtue of the place confined to those who should resort to it in person; for the monks had prayed for and had obtained a delegation of the Virgin's power, and a small portion of powder from the porous rock, swallowed in a little water, would be equally efficacious to women having faith. A huge chamber had been cut away in the back of the grotto by pilgrims, who had taken



with them to their distant homes some of this beautiful provision for a want of nature, and Paul and myself each took a pilgrim's share.

It was dark when I returned to the convent, followed by my wild Arnaout, whom, by-the-way, I have neglected for some time. I had told him on my arrival that I should not need his escort any farther ; but he swore that he had his orders, and would not leave me until he saw me safe within the walls of Jerusalem ; and so far he had been as good as his word ; for, wherever I went, he was close at my heels, following with invincible gravity, but never intruding, and the continual rattling of his steel scabbard being the only intimation I had of his presence. He was now following me through the stone court of the convent, into the room fitted up for the reception of pilgrims and travellers. I liked him, and I liked to hear the clanking of his sword at my heels ; I would have staked my life upon his faith ; and such confidence did he inspire by his bold, frank bearing, his manly, muscular figure, and his excellent weapons, that with a dozen such I would not have feared a whole tribe of Bedouins. In another country and a former age he would have been the *beau ideal* of a dashing cavalier, and an unflinching companion at the wine-cup or in the battle-field. I bore in mind our conversation in the morning about wine, and was determined that my liberal expounder of the Koran should not suffer from my abstinence. The superior, apologizing for the want of animal food, had told me

to call for anything in the convent, and I used the privilege for the benefit of my thirsty Mussulman. The first thing I called for was wine; and, while supper was preparing, we were tasting its quality. He was no stickler for trifles, and accepted, without any difficulty, my apology for not being able to pledge him in full bumpers; and although most of this time Paul was away, and we could not exchange a word, the more he drank the better I liked him. It was so long since I had had with me a companion I liked, that I "cottoned" to him more and more, and resolved to make the most of him. I had a plate for him at table by the side of me; and when Paul, who did not altogether enter into my feelings, asked him if he would not rather eat alone, on the floor, he half drew his sword, and, driving it back into its scabbard, swore that he would eat with me if it was on the top of a minaret. We sat down to table, and I did the honours with an unsparing hand. He attempted for a moment the use of the knife and fork, but threw them down in disgust, and trusted to the means with which nature had provided him. The wine he knew how to manage, and for the rest he trusted to me; and I gave him bread, olives, fish, milk, honey, sugar, figs, grapes, dates, &c. &c. about as fast as I could hand them over, one after the other, all together, pellmell, and with such an utter contempt of all rules of science as would have made a Frenchman go mad. Paul by this time entered into the spirit of the thing; and when my bold guest held up for a moment,

he stood by with a raw egg, the shell broken, and turning back his head, poured it down his throat. I followed with a plate of brown sugar, into which he thrust his hand to the knuckles, sent down a huge mouthful to sweeten the egg, and, nearly kicking over the table with an ejaculation about equivalent to our emphatic "enough," threw himself upon the divan. I wound him up with coffee and pipes; and when the superior came to me in the evening, to the scandal of the holy brotherhood, my wild companion was lying asleep, as drunk as a lord, upon the divan.

Several of the monks came in to see me; and all loved to talk of the world they had left. They were all Italians; and in the dreariness and desolation of Judea, in spite of monastic vows, their hearts turned to the sunny skies of their beautiful native land. They left me at an early hour; and I trust the reader will forgive me, if, in the holy city of Bethlehem, I forgot for a moment the high and holy associations connected with the place, in the sense of enjoyment awakened by the extraordinary luxury of a pair of sheets, a luxury I had not known since my last night in Cairo.

· Tempted as I was to yield myself at once to the enjoyment, I paused awhile to look at the sleeping figure of my kervash. He lay extended at full length on his back, with his arms folded across his breast, his right hand clutching the hilt of his sword, and his left the handle of a pistol; his broad chest rose and fell with his long and heavy respirations; and he slept like a man who expected

to be roused by a cry to battle. His youth and manhood had been spent in scenes of violence; his hands were red with blood; murder and rapine had been familiar to him; and when his blood was up in battle, the shrieks and groans of the dying were music in his ears; yet he slept, and his sleep was calm and sound as that of childhood. I stood over him with the candle in my hand, and flashed the light across his face; his rugged features contracted, and his sword rattled in his convulsive grasp. I blew out the light and jumped into bed. Once during the night I was awakened by his noise; by the dim light of a small lamp that hung from the ceiling I saw him stumble to the table, seize a huge jar of water, and apply it to his lips; I saw him throw back his head, and heard his long, regular, and continued swallows; and when he had finished the jar he drew a long breath, went to the window, came to my bed-side, looked at me for a moment, probably thinking what a deal of useless trouble I took in pulling off my clothes; and throwing himself upon the divan, in a few moments he was again asleep.

In the morning immediately after breakfast one of the monks came to conduct me through the convent. The building covered a great extent of ground; and for strength and solidity, as well as size, resembled a fortress. It was built by the Empress Helena, over the spot consecrated as the birthplace of our Saviour, and was intended, so far as human handiwork could do so, to honour and reverence the holy spot. The insufficient

means of the pious empress, however, or some other cause, prevented its being finished according to the plan she had designed ; and the charity of subsequent Christians has barely sufficed to keep it from falling to ruin. The great church would have been a magnificent building if finished according to her plan ; but now, in its incomplete state, it is a melancholy monument of defeated ambition. On each side is a range of noble columns, supporting a frieze of wood, which the monk told me was cedar from Lebanon, and still remaining almost as sound as the solid stone. The whole building is divided among the Catholics, Greeks, and Armenians, the three great bodies who represent, or rather misrepresent, Christianity in the East. Each has its limits, beyond which the others must not pass ; and, again, there are certain parts which are common to all. The Turkish government exercises a control over it ; and, taking advantage of the dissensions between these different professors, sells the privileges to the highest bidder. In the great church the Greeks, happening to have been the richest, are the largest proprietors, to the great scandal of the Catholics, who hate the Greeks with a most orthodox virulence.

The Grotto of the Nativity is under the floor of the church ; the Greeks having an entrance directly by its side, and the Catholics by a longer and more distant passage. I descended by the latter. My Arnaout was close at my heels, grave and sober as if he had never known the taste of

wine, and following with a respect that might have satisfied the most bigoted Christian. Indeed, it was a thing to be noted, with what respect and reverence this wild and lawless Mussulman regarded the holy places, consecrated by a religion he believed false and the worship of a people he despised. Nevertheless, Paul was scandalized at the eyes of an unbeliever being permitted to see the holy places; and stopped at the top of the staircase, to urge upon me the propriety of making him stay behind. The kervash seemed to understand what he was saying, and to intimate by his looks that it would not be an easy matter to turn him back. I did not think, however, that the feet of a Mussulman would be in themselves a profanation, and the monk making no objection, I silenced Paul's.

Passing through the chapel of the Catholic convent, where the monks were teaching the children of the Arab Christians the principles of the Catholic faith, I was conducted to the room of the superior, where, among other relics which I now forget, he showed me the withered hand of an infant, preserved among the treasures of the convent, as having belonged to one of the innocents massacred by the order of Herod. Near the door of the chapel we descended a flight of stone steps, and then a second, until we came to an excavation in the solid rock, and, following a passage to the right, came to a little chapel, with an altar, dedicated to Joseph, the husband of Mary. At the end of this passage was a large chamber, called

the school of St. Jerome, where that great Catholic saint wrote his version of the Bible, the celebrated Vulgate. Passing out through the door of this chamber, on the right is the tomb of the saint; and directly opposite are the tombs of Santa Paula and another whose name I have forgotten; very good ladies, no doubt; but who they were, or why they were buried in that holy place, I did not understand; although they must have died in the odour of sanctity, as their bodies have since been removed to the papal city. Returning into the first passage, and advancing a few steps, on the left is an altar over the pit into which the bodies of the murdered innocents were thrown. Under the altar is a recess with an iron grating, opening into the pit, or rather vault below. By the light of a torch I gazed long and earnestly within, but could see nothing that gave confirmation to the story. Over the altar was a rude painting, representing the massacred infants held up by their heels, with their throats cut, and their bowels gushing out; the anguish of the mothers, and all the necessary and fearful accompaniments of such a scene. A few paces farther is an altar, over the spot where Joseph sat during the birth of the divine infant, meditating upon the great event; and farther on, to the left, is the entrance to the Grotto of the Nativity.

It was the hour assigned for the use of the Armenians, and the monks were all there chanting the praises of the Redeemer. The chamber of the grotto is thirty-seven feet long and eleven

wide, with a marble floor and walls, the latter adorned with tapestry and paintings. Directly in front of the door by which we entered, at the other end of the grotto, is a semicircular recess, lined and floored with small blocks of marble; and in the centre a single star, with the inscription, "*Hic natus est Jesus Christus de Virga,*" here Christ was born of the Virgin. The star in the east which went before the wise men, says the tradition, rested over this spot; and fourteen lamps, the gifts of Christian princes, burning night and day, constantly illumine the birthplace of salvation to a ruined world. On the right, descending two steps, is a chamber paved and lined with marble, having at one end a block polished and hollowed out; and this is the manger in which our Saviour was laid. Over the altar is a picture representing a stable with horses and cattle, and behind a little iron wickerwork are five lamps constantly burning. Directly opposite is the altar of the magi, where the three kings sat when they came to offer presents to the Son of God. Over it is a picture representing them in the act of making their offerings; and one of the kings is represented as an Ethiopian.

All this has but little conformity with the rude scene of the stable and the manger as described in the Bible; and, in all probability, most of the holy places pointed out in Bethlehem, and adorned and transformed by the false but well-meaning piety of Christians, have no better claim to authenticity than the credulity of a weak and pious

old woman. But amid all the doubts that present themselves when we stop to ponder and reflect, it is sufficient for our enjoyment of these scenes to know that we are in "Bethlehem of Judea," consecrated by the greatest event in the history of the world, the birth of the Son of God. We know that, within the atmosphere we breathe, Christ first appeared on earth; that one of the stars of heaven left its place among the constellations, and hovered over the spot on which we stand; that the kings of the earth came here to offer gifts to the holy child; and, beholding multitudes of pilgrims from far-distant lands constantly prostrating themselves before the altar, in the earnestness and sincerity of undoubting faith, we give ourselves up to the illusion, if illusion it be, and are ready to believe that we are indeed standing where Christ was born.

My Arnaut behaved remarkably well, though once he broke the stillness of the grotto by an involuntary exclamation; his loud harsh voice, and the rattling of his armour, startled for a moment the monks and praying pilgrims. On coming out I told him that the Christians were much more liberal than the Mussulmans; for we had permitted him to see all the holy places in the church, while I had been violently driven from the door of the mosque in Hebron. He railed at the ignorance and prejudices of his countrymen, and swore, if I would go back to Hebron, he would carry me through the mosque on the point of his sword. I did not much relish

this method of entering a mosque, but took it, as it was meant, for a warm expression of his willingness to serve me; and we returned to the apartment of the superior to bid him farewell. The superior accompanied us to the door of the convent; and, without meaning to be scandalous, or insinuate that there was anything wrong in it, although he was a young and handsome man, I left him talking with a woman.

CHAPTER X.

The Tomb of Rachel. — First View of Jerusalem. — Falling among Thieves. — Potent Sway of the Pacha. — A Turkish Dignitary. — A Missionary. — Easter in Jerusalem. — A Little Congregation.

GIVING a last look to the Valley of the Shepherds, we were soon on the mountain's side ; and very soon all the interest with which I had regarded Bethlehem was lost in the more absorbing feeling with which I looked forward to Jerusalem. My muleteer had gone on the night before ; my Arnaout knew nothing of the holy places on the road, and we took with us a Christian boy to point them out. The first was the tomb of Rachel, a large building with a whitened dome, and having within it a high oblong monument, built of brick, and stuccoed over. I dismounted and walked round the tomb, inside and out, and again resumed my journey. All that we know in regard to this tomb is, that Rachel died when journeying with Jacob from Sychem to Hebron, and that Jacob buried her near Bethlehem ; and whether it be her tomb or not, I could not but remark, that while youth and beauty have faded away, and the queens of the East have died and been forgotten, and Zenobia and Cleopatra sleep in unknown graves, year after year thousands of

pilgrims are thronging to the supposed last resting place of a poor Hebrew woman.

The boy next conducted us to a stony field, by which, as he said, the Virgin once passed and asked for beans ; the owner of the field told her there were none ; and, to punish him for his falsehood and lack of charity, the beans were all changed into stones, and the country had remained barren ever since. Paul had been twice to Bethlehem without seeing this field ; and he immediately dismounted and joined the boy in searching for the holy petrifications. " It was wonderful," said Paul, as he picked up some little stones as much like beans as anything else ; " and see, too," said he, " how barren the country is !" In about an hour we came to the Greek monastery of St. Elias ; a large stone building, standing on an eminence, and commanding a fine view of Bethlehem. Stopping to water my horse at a fountain in front of the monastery, I turned to take a last look at Bethlehem ; and my horse moving a few paces, when I turned again I saw in full view the holy city of Jerusalem. I did not expect it, and was startled by its proximity. It looked so small, and yet lay spread out before me so distinctly, that it seemed as if I ought to perceive the inhabitants moving through the streets, and hear their voices humming in my ears. I saw that it was walled all around, and that it stood alone in an extensive waste of mountains without suburbs, or even a solitary habitation beyond its walls. There were no domes, steeples, or turrets

to break the monotony of its aspect, and even the mosques and minarets made no show. It would have been a relief, and afforded something to excite the feelings, to behold it in ruins, or dreary and desolate like Petra, or with the banner of the Prophet, the blood-red Mussulman flag, waving high above its walls. But all was tame and vacant. There was nothing in its appearance that afforded me a sensation; it did not even inspire me with melancholy; and I probably convict myself when I say that the only image it presented to my mind was that of a city larger and in better condition than the usual smaller class of those within the Turkish dominion. I was obliged to rouse myself by recalling to mind the long train of extraordinary incidents of which that little city had been the theatre, and which made it, in the eyes of the Christian at least, the most hallowed spot on earth. One thing only particularly struck me—its exceeding stillness. It was about mid-day; but there was no throng of people entering or departing from its gates, no movement of living creatures to be seen beneath its walls. All was as quiet as if the inhabitants were, like the Spaniards, taking their noonday sleep. We passed the Pools of Hezekiah, and came in sight of the Mount of Olives; and now, for the first signs of life, we saw streaming from the gate a long procession of men, women, and children, on dromedaries, camels, and horses, and on foot; pilgrims who had visited Calvary and the holy sepulchre, and were now bending their steps towards Bethlehem.

At every moment the approach was gaining interest ; but in a few minutes, while yet about an hour distant from the walls, my attention was diverted from the city by the sudden appearance of our muleteer, who had left us the day before in a pet, and gone on before us to Jerusalem. He was sitting on the ground alone, so wan and wo-begone, so changed from the spruce and well-dressed muleteer who had accompanied us from Hebron, that I scarcely recognized him. Every article of his former dress was gone, from his gay turban to his long boots ; and in their stead he displayed an old yellow striped shawl, doing duty as a turban, and a ragged Bedouin gown. Late in the afternoon, while hurrying on to get in before the gates should be closed, he was hailed by four Arabs ; and when he attempted to escape by pushing his donkey, he was brought to by a musket-ball passing through the folds of his dress and grazing his side. A hole in his coat, however, did not save it ; and, according to the Arab mode of robbery, they stripped him to his skin, and left him stark naked in the road. From his manner of telling the story, I am inclined to think that the poor fellow had not conducted himself very valiantly ; for though he did not regard the scratch on his side or the risk he had run of his life, he mourned bitterly over the loss of his garments. Arrived in the Holy Land, I had thought danger of all kinds at an end ; and I could not help recognising the singular good fortune which had accompanied me thus far, and congratulating myself

upon the accident which had detained me at Bethlehem.

We were soon approaching the walls of Jerusalem, and seemed to be almost at their foot ; but we were on one of the mountains that encompass the city, and the deep valley of Jehoshaphat was yet between us and the holy city—the sacred burying-ground of the Jews, the “gathering place of nations.” Crossing this valley, we ascended on the other side, and in a few moments were on one of the seven hills on which the city is built, and entering at the Bethlehem gate. It was guarded by a Turkish soldier, and half a dozen more lay basking in the sun outside, who raised their heads as I approached, their long mustaches curling as they looked at me ; and though they gave me no greeting, they let me pass without any molestation. On the right was the citadel ; a soldier was on the walls, and a small red flag, the standard of Mohammed, was drooping against its staff. In front was an open place, irregular, and apparently formed by clearing away the ruins of fallen houses. As in all Turkish cities, the stillness was unbroken ; there was no rattling of wheels over the pavements, nor even the tramp of horses.

We wound around the walls, and dismounted at the only asylum for strangers, the Latin Convent. I presented myself to the superior ; and, after receiving from him a kind and cordial welcome, with the usual apologies for meagre fare on account of its being Lent, went to the room assigned me ; and had just sat down to dinner,

when my poor muleteer entered in greater distress than ever.

Afraid of the very thing that happened, he had started immediately on his return to Hebron, and at the gate his mules were seized by a soldier for the use of the government. It was in a spirit of perfect wretchedness that the poor fellow, still smarting under the loss of his clothes, almost threw himself at my feet, and begged me to intercede for him. I was, of course, anxious to help him if I could, and immediately rose to go with him; but Paul told me to remain quiet, and he would settle the matter in five minutes. Paul was a great admirer of the Pacha. Wherever his government was established, he had made it safe for the traveller; and Paul's courage always rose and fell according to the subdued or unsubdued state of the population. In the city of Jerusalem the wind could scarcely blow without the leave of Ibrahim Pacha; and Paul had mounted on stilts almost as soon as we crossed the threshold of the gate. He had already been at his old tricks of pushing the unresisting Arabs about, and kicking them out of the way, as in the miserable villages on the Nile; and, strong in the omnipotence of the firman, he now hurried to the gate; but he came back faster than he went. I have no doubt that he was very presuming and impudent, and richly deserved more than he got; but, at all events, he returned on a full run, and in a towering passion. The soldier had given him the usual Mussulman abuse, showering upon him the accus-

tomed "dog" and "Christian ;" and, moreover, had driven him to the verge of madness by calling him a "Jew," and threatening to whip both him and his master. Paul ran away from what I am inclined to believe would have been his share, as the Arabs had taken part against him ; and, burning with the indignity of being called a Jew, begged me to seek redress of the governor. I was roused myself, not so much by the particular insult to Paul, as by the general intention of the thing, and the disconsolate figure of my poor muleteer ; and leaving my unfinished meal, with my firman in my hand, and Paul and the muleteer at my heels, I started for the palace of the governor.

Old things and new are strangely blended in Jerusalem ; and the residence of the Turkish governor is in the large building which to this day bears the name of Pontius Pilate. Paul told me its history as we were ascending the steps ; and it passed through my mind as a strange thing, that almost the first moment after entering the city, I was making a complaint, perhaps in the same hall where the Jews had complained of Christ before Pontius Pilate, having with me a follower of that Christ, whom the Jews reviled and buffeted, burning under the indignity of being called a Jew.

The governor, as is the custom of governors in the East, and probably as Pontius Pilate did in the time of our Saviour, sat in a large room, ready to receive everybody who had any com-

plaint to make ; his divan was a raised platform, on an iron camp-bedstead, covered with rich Turkey rugs, and over them a splendid lion-skin. His face was noble, and his long black beard the finest I ever saw ; a pair of large pistols and a Damascus sabre were lying by his side, and a rich fur cloak, thrown back over his shoulders, displayed a form that might have served as a model for a Hercules. Altogether, he reminded me of Richard in his tent on the plains of Acre. At the moment of my entry he was breathing on a brilliant diamond, and I noticed on his finger an uncommonly beautiful emerald. He received me with great politeness ; and when I handed him the Pacha's firman, with a delicacy and courtesy I never saw surpassed, he returned it to me unopened and unread, telling me that my dress and appearance were sufficient recommendation to the best services in his power. If the reader would know what dress and appearance are a sufficient recommendation to the best offices of a Turkish governor, I will merely mention that, having thrown off, or rather having been stripped of, most of my Turkish dress at Hebron, I stood before the governor in a red tarbouch, with a long black silk tassel, a blue roundabout jacket buttoned up to the throat, grey pantaloons, boots splashed with mud, a red sash, a pair of large Turkish pistols, sword, and my Nubian club in my hand ; and the only decided mark of aristocracy about me was my beard, which, though

not so long as the governor's, far exceeded it in brilliancy of complexion.

The few moments I had had for observation, and the courteous demeanour of the governor, disarmed me of my anger ; and coffee and the first pipe over, I stated my grievances very dispassionately. Paul's wrath was still dominant, and I have no doubt he represented the conduct of the soldier as much worse than it was ; for the governor, turning to me without any further inquiries, asked if he should have him bastinadoed. This summary justice startled even Paul ; and feeling a little ashamed of my own precipitation, I was now more anxious to prevent punishment than I had before been to procure it ; and begged him to spare the soldier, and merely order him to release the mules. Without another word he called a janizary, and requesting me to wait, ordered him to accompany Paul to the gate where the scene took place ; and when Paul returned, the muleteer, with a thankful heart, was already on his way to Hebron. I had the satisfaction of learning, too, that the officers were on the track of the robbers who had stripped him, and before morning the governor expected to have them in custody.

Several times afterward I called upon the governor, and was always treated with the same politeness. Once, when I was walking alone outside the walls, I met him sitting on the grass, with his janizaries and slaves standing up around him ;

and the whole Turkish population being out wandering among the tombs, he procured for me a respect and consideration which I think were useful to me afterward, by calling me to a seat beside him, and giving me the pipe from his own mouth. Some months afterward, at Genoa, I saw a brief article in an Italian paper, referring to a previous article, giving an account of a then late revolution there, in which the governor was on the point of falling into the hands of the insurgents. I have never seen any account of the particulars of this revolution, and do not know whether he is now living or dead. In the East life hangs by so brittle a thread, that when you part from a man in power, in all probability you will never see him again. I can only hope that the governor of Jerusalem still lives, and that his condition in life is as happy as when I saw him.

It was Saturday afternoon when I arrived at Jerusalem. I had a letter of introduction to Mr. Thompson, an American missionary, and the first thing I did was to look for him. One of the monks of the convent gave me the direction to the American priest, not knowing his name; and, instead of Mr. Thompson, I found Mr. Whiting, who had been there about a year in his place. Like the governor, Mr. Whiting did not want any credentials; but here, being among judges, it was not my dress and appearance that recommended me. I was an American, and at that distance from home the name of countryman was enough. In the city of Jerusalem such a meeting was to

him a rare and most welcome incident ; while to me, who had so long been debarred all conversation except with Paul and the Arabs, it was a pleasure which few can ever know, to sit down with a compatriot, and once more in my native tongue, hold converse of my native land.

Each of us soon learned to look upon the other as a friend ; for we found that an old friend and schoolmate of mine had been also a friend and schoolmate of his own. He would have had me stay at his house ; but I returned to the convent, and with my thoughts far away, and full of the home of which we had been talking, I slept for the first night in the city of Jerusalem.

The first and most interesting object within the walls of the holy city, the spot to which every pilgrim first directs his steps, is the holy sepulchre. The traveller who has never read the descriptions of those who have preceded him in a pilgrimage through the Holy Land, finds his expectations strangely disappointed, when, approaching this hallowed tomb, he sees around him the tottering houses of a ruined city, and is conducted to the door of a gigantic church.

This edifice is another, and perhaps the principal, monument of the Empress Helena's piety. What authority she had for fixing here the site of the Redeemer's burial-place I will not stop to inquire. Doubtless she had her reasons ; and there is more pleasure in believing than in raising doubts which cannot be confirmed. In the front of the church is a large courtyard, filled

with dealers in beads, crucifixes, and relics; among the most conspicuous of whom are the Christians of Bethlehem, with figures of the Saviour, the Virgin, and a host of saints, carved from mother of pearl, in all kinds of fantastic shapes. It was precisely the time at which I had wished and expected to be in Jerusalem—the season of Easter—and thousands of pilgrims, from every part of the Eastern world, had already arrived for the great ceremonies of the holy week. The court was thronged with them, crowded together so that it was almost impossible to move, and waiting, like myself, till the door of the church should be opened.

The holy sepulchre, as in the days when all the chivalry of Europe armed to wrest it from them, is still in the hands of the infidels; and it would have made the sword of an old crusader leap from its scabbard to behold a haughty Turk, with the air of a lord and master, standing sentinel at the door, and with his long mace beating and driving back the crowd of struggling Christians. As soon as the door was opened a rush was made for entrance; and as I was in the front rank, before the impetus ceased, amid a perfect storm of pushing, yelling, and shouting, I was carried almost headlong into the body of the church. The press continued behind, hurrying me along, and kicking off my shoes; and in a state of desperate excitement both of mind and body, utterly unsuited to the place and time, I found myself standing over the so called tomb of Christ; where, to enhance the

incongruity of the scene, at the head of the sepulchre stood a long-bearded monk, with a plate in his hand, receiving the paras of the pilgrims. My dress marked me as a different person from the miserable, beggarly crowd before me; and expecting a better contribution from me, at the tomb of Him who had pronounced that all men are equal in the sight of God, with an expression of contempt like the "canaille" of a Frenchman, and with kicks, cuffs, and blows, he drove back those before me, and gave me a place at the head of the sepulchre. My feelings were painfully disturbed, as well by the manner of my entrance as by the irreverent demeanour of the monk; and disappointed, disgusted, and sick at heart, while hundreds were still struggling for admission, I turned away and left the church. A warmer imagination than mine could perhaps have seen, in a white marble sarcophagus, "the sepulchre hewn out of a rock," and in the fierce struggling of these barefooted pilgrims the devotion of sincere and earnest piety, burning to do homage in the holiest of places; but I could not.

It was refreshing to turn from this painful exhibition of a deformed and degraded Christianity to a simpler and purer scene. The evening before, Mr. Whiting had told me that religious exercises would be performed at his house the next day: and I hastened from the church to join in the grateful service. I found him sitting at a table, with a large family Bible open before him. His wife was present, with two little Armenian girls, whom she was educating to assist her in her

school; and I was not a little surprised to find that, when I had taken my seat, the congregation was assembled. In fact Mr. Whiting had only been waiting for me; and, as soon as I came in, he commenced the service to which I had been so long a stranger. It was long since I had heard the words of truth from the lips of a preacher; and as I sat with my eyes fixed upon the Garden of Gethsemane and the Mount of Olives, I could not help thinking of it as a strangely-interesting fact, that here in the holy city of Jerusalem, where Christ preached and died, though thousands were calling upon his name, the only persons who were praising him in simplicity and truth were a missionary and his wife, and a passing traveller, all from a far distant land. I had, moreover, another subject of reflection. In Greece I had been struck with the fact that the only schools of instruction were those established by American missionaries, and supported by the liberality of American citizens; that our young republic was thus, in part, discharging the debt which the world owes to the ancient mistress of science and the arts, by sending forth her sons to bestow the elements of knowledge upon the descendants of Homer and Pericles, Plato and Aristotle; and here, on the very spot whence the apostles had gone forth to preach the glad tidings of salvation to a ruined world, a missionary from the same distant land was standing as an apostle over the grave of Christianity, a solitary labourer striving to re-establish the pure faith and worship that were founded on this spot eighteen centuries ago.

CHAPTER XI.

Church of the Holy Sepulchre.—An unexpected Discovery.—
Mount Calvary.—The Sepulchre.—The Valley of Jehoshaphat.—The Garden of Gethsemane.—Place of the Temple.—The four Great Tombs.—Siloa's Brook.

DURING my stay in Jerusalem a day seldom passed in which I did not visit the Church of the Holy Sepulchre ; but my occupation was chiefly to observe the conduct of the pilgrims ; and, if the reader will accompany me into the interior, he will see what I was in the habit of seeing every day.

The key of the church is kept by the governor of the city ; the door is guarded by a Turk, and opened only at fixed hours, and then only with the consent of the three convents and in the presence of their several dragomans ; an arrangement which often causes great and vexatious delays to such as desire admittance. This formality was probably intended for solemnity and effect, but its consequence is exactly the reverse ; for, as soon as the door is opened, the pilgrims, who have almost always been kept waiting for some time, and have naturally become impatient, rush in, struggling with each other, overturning the dragomans, and thumped by the Turkish door-keeper, and are driven like a herd of wild animals into the body of the church. I do not mean to

exaggerate a picture, the lightest of whose shades is already too dark. I describe only what I saw, and with this assurance the reader must believe me when I say that I frequently considered it putting life and limb in peril to mingle in that crowd. Probably it is not always so; but there were at that time within the walls of Jerusalem from ten to twenty thousand pilgrims, and all had come to visit the holy sepulchre.

Supposing, then, the rush to be over, and the traveller to have recovered from its effects, he will find himself in a large apartment, forming a sort of vestibule; on the left, in a recess of the wall, is a large divan, cushioned and carpetted, where the Turkish doorkeeper is usually sitting, with half a dozen of his friends, smoking the long pipe and drinking coffee, and always conducting himself with great dignity and propriety. Directly in front, surmounted by an iron railing, having at each end three enormous wax candles more than twenty feet high, and suspended above it a number of silver lamps of different sizes and fashions, gifts from the Catholic, Greek, and Armenian convents, is a long flat stone, called the "stone of unction;" and on this, it is said, the body of our Lord was laid when taken down from the cross, and washed and anointed in preparation for sepulture. This is the first object that arrests the pilgrims on their entrance; and here they prostrate themselves in succession, the old and the young, women and children, the rich man and the beggar, and all kiss the sacred stone. It is a slab.

of polished white marble ; and one of the monks, whom I questioned on the subject as he rose from his knees, after kissing it most devoutly, told me that it was not the genuine stone, which he said was under it, the marble having been placed there as an ornamental covering, and to protect the hallowed relic from the abuses of the Greeks.

On the left is an iron circular railing, in the shape of a large parrot's cage, having within it a lamp, and marking the spot where the women sat while the body was anointed for the tomb. In front of this is an open area, surrounded by high square columns, supporting a gallery above. The area is covered by a dome, imposing in appearance and effect ; and directly under, in the centre of the area, is an oblong building, about twenty feet long and twelve feet high, circular at the back, but square and finished with a platform in front : and within this building is the holy sepulchre.

Leaving for a moment the throng that is constantly pressing at the door of the sepulchre, let us make the tour of the church. Around the open space under the dome are small chapels for the Syrians, Copts, Maronites, and other sects of Christians who have not, like the Catholics, the Greeks, and Armenians, large chapels in the body of the church. Between two of the pillars is a small door, opening to a dark gallery, which leads, as the monks told me, to the tombs of Joseph and Nicodemus, between which and that of the Saviour there is a subterranean communication. These tombs are excavated in the rock, which here forms

the floor of the chamber. Without any expectation of making a discovery, I remember that once, in prying about this part of the building alone, I took the little taper that lighted the chamber and stepped down into the tomb; and I had just time to see that one of the excavations never could have been intended for a tomb, being not more than three feet long, when I heard the footsteps of pilgrim visitors, and scrambled out with such haste that I let the taper fall, put out the light, and had to grope my way back in the dark.

Farther on, and nearly in range of the front of the sepulchre, is a large opening, forming a sort of court to the entrance of the Latin Chapel. On one side is a gallery containing a fine organ; and the chapel itself is neat enough, and differs but little from those in the churches of Italy. This is called the Chapel of Apparition, where Christ appeared to the Virgin. Within the door, on the right, in an enclosure, completely hidden from view, is the pillar of flagellation, to which our Saviour was tied when he was scourged, before being taken into the presence of Pontius Pilate. A long stick is passed through a hole in the enclosure, the handle being outside, and the pilgrim thrusts it in till it strikes against the pillar, when he draws it out and kisses the point. Only one half of the pillar is here; the other half is in one of the churches at Rome, where may also be seen the table on which our Saviour ate his last supper with his disciples, and the stone on which the cock crowed when Peter denied his master!

Going back again from the door of the Chapel of Apparition, and turning to the left, on the right is the outside of the Greek Chapel, which occupies the largest space in the body of the church ; and on the left is a range of chapels and doors, the first of which leads to the prison where, they say, our Saviour was confined before he was led to crucifixion. In front of the door is an unintelligible machine, described as the stone on which our Saviour was placed when put in the stocks. I had never heard of this incident in the story of man's redemption, nor, in all probability, has the reader ; but the Christians in Jerusalem have a great deal more of such knowledge than they gain from the Bible. Even Paul knew much that is not recorded in the sacred volume ; for he had a book, written by a priest in Malta, and giving many particulars in the life of our Saviour which all the evangelists never knew, or knowing, have entirely omitted.

Next is the chapel where the soldier, who struck his spear into the side of the Redeemer as he hung upon the cross, retired and wept over his transgression. Beyond this is the chapel where the Jews divided Christ's raiment, and "cast lots for his vesture." The next is one of the most holy places in the church, the chapel of the cross. Descending twenty-eight broad marble steps, the visiter comes to a large chamber eighteen paces square, dimly lighted by a few distant lamps ; the roof is supported by four short columns with enormous capitals. In front of the steps is the

altar, and on the right a seat on which the Empress Helena, advised by a dream where the true cross was to be found, sat and watched the workmen who were digging below. Descending again fourteen steps, another chamber is reached, darker and more dimly lighted than the first, and hung with faded red tapestry; a marble slab, having on it a figure of the cross, covers the mouth of the pit in which the true cross was found. The next chapel is over the spot where our Saviour was crowned with thorns; and under the altar, protected by an iron grating, is the very stone on which he sat. Then the visiter arrives at Mount Calvary.

A narrow marble staircase of eighteen steps leads to a chapel about fifteen feet square, paved with marble in mosaic, and hung on all sides with silken tapestry and lamps dimly burning; the chapel is divided by two short pillars, hung also with silk, and supporting quadrangular arches. At the extremity is a large altar, ornamented with paintings and figures; and under the altar a circular silver plate, with a hole in the centre, indicating the spot in which rested the step of the cross. On each side of the hole is another, the two designating the places where the crosses of the two thieves were erected; and near by, on the same marble platform, is a crevice about three feet long and three inches wide, having brass bars over it and a covering of silk; removing the covering, by the aid of a lamp I saw beneath a fissure in a rock; and this, say the monks, is the

rock which was rent asunder when our Saviour, in the agonies of death, cried out from the cross, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Descending to the floor of the church, underneath is an iron grating which shows more distinctly the fissure in the rock; and directly opposite is a large monument over the head of—Adam.

The reader will probably think that all these things are enough to be comprised under one roof; and, having finished the tour of the church, I returned to the great object of the pilgrimage to Jerusalem—the Holy Sepulchre. Taking off the shoes on the marble platform in front, the visiter is admitted by a low door, on entering which the proudest head must needs do reverence. In the centre of the first chamber is the stone which was rolled away from the mouth of the sepulchre—a square block of marble, cut and polished; and though the Armenians have lately succeeded in establishing the genuineness of the stone in their chapel on Mount Zion, (the admission by the other monks, however, being always accompanied by the assertion that they stole it,) yet the infatuated Greek still kisses and adores this block of marble as the very stone on which the angel sat when he announced to the women, "He is not dead; he is risen; come see the place where the Lord lay." Again bending the head, and lower than before, the visiter enters the inner chamber, the holiest of holy places. The sepulchre "hewn out of the rock" is a marble sarcophagus, somewhat resembling a common marble bathing-tub, with a lid

of the same material. Over it hang forty-three lamps, which burn without ceasing night and day. The sarcophagus is six feet one inch long, and occupies about one half of the chamber; and one of the monks being always present to receive the gifts or tribute of the pilgrims, there is only room for three or four at a time to enter. The walls are of a greenish marble, usually called verd-antique, and this is all. And it will be borne in mind that all this is in a building above ground, standing on the floor of the church.

If I can form any judgment from my own feelings, every man other than a blind and determined enthusiast, when he stands by the side of that marble sarcophagus, must be ready to exclaim, "This is not the place where the Lord lay!"—and yet I must be wrong, for sensible men have thought otherwise; and Dr. Richardson, the most cautious traveller in the Holy Land, speaks of it as the "Mansion of Victory, where Christ triumphed over the grave, and disarmed death of all its terrors." The feelings of a man are to be envied who can so believe. I cannot imagine a higher and holier enthusiasm; and it would be far more agreeable to sustain than to dissolve such illusions; but, although I might be deceived by my own imagination and the glowing descriptions of travellers, I would at least have the merit of not deceiving others. The sepulchre of Christ is too holy a thing to be made the subject of trickery and deception; and I am persuaded that it would be far better for the interests of Christianity

that it had remained for ever locked up in the hands of the Turks, and all access to it been denied to Christian feet.

But I was not disposed to cavil. It was far easier, and suited my humour far better, to take things as I found them; and in this spirit, under the guidance of a monk, and accompanied by a procession of pilgrims, I wandered through the streets of Jerusalem; visited the Pool of Bethesda, where David saw Bathsheba bathing; the five porches where the sick were brought to be healed; the house of Simon the Pharisee, where Mary Magdalene confessed her sins; the prison of St. Peter; the house of Mary the mother of Mark; the mansion of Dives and the house of Lazarus, (which, by-the-way, not to be sceptical again, did not look as if its tenant had ever lain at its neighbour's gate, and begged for the "crumbs which fell from the rich man's table"); and entering the Via Dolorosa, the way by which the Saviour passed from the judgment-hall of Pilate to Calvary, saw the spot where the people laid hold of Simon the Cyrene, and compelled him to bear the cross; three different stones on which Christ, fainting, sat down to rest; passed under the arch called *Ecce Homo*, and looked up at the window from which the Roman judge exclaimed to the persecuting Jews, "Behold the man!"

But if the stranger leaves the walls of the city, his faith is not so severely tested; and, for my own part, disposed to indemnify myself for my unwilling scepticism, the third day after my ar-

rival at Jerusalem, on a bright and beautiful morning, with my Nubian club in my hand, which soon became the terror of all the cowardly dogs in Jerusalem, I stood on the threshold of St. Stephen's Gate. Paul was with me; and stopping for a moment among the tombs in the Turkish burying-ground, we descended towards the bridge across the brook Kedron, and the mysterious Valley of Jehoshaphat. Here I was, indeed, among the hallowed places of the Bible. Here all was as Nature had left it, and spared by the desecrating hand of man; and as I gazed upon the vast sepulchral monuments, the tombs of Absalom, of Zachariah, and Jehoshaphat, and the thousands and tens of thousands of Hebrew tombstones covering the declivity of the mountain, I had no doubt I was looking upon that great gathering-place where, three thousand years ago, the Jew buried his dead under the shadow of the Temple of Solomon; and where, even at this day, in every country where his race is known, it is the dearest wish of his heart that his bones may be laid to rest among those of his long-buried ancestors.

Near the bridge is a small table-rock, revered as the spot where Stephen the Martyr was stoned to death; but even here one cannot go far without finding the handiwork of the Lady Helena. A little to the left is the tomb of Joseph and Mary. Descending a few steps to a large marble door, opening to a subterraneous church, excavated from the solid rock, and thence by a flight

of fifty marble steps, each twenty feet long, we came to the floor of the chamber. On the right, in a large recess, is the tomb of the Virgin, having over it an altar, and over the altar a painting representing her death-bed, with the Son standing over her, to comfort her and receive her blessing. This is an interesting domestic relation in which to exhibit a mother and her son ; but rather inconsistent with the Bible account of the Virgin Mother being present at the crucifixion of our Lord. Indeed, it is a singular fact, that with all the pious homage which they pay to the Son of God, adoring him as equal with the Father in power and goodness, and worshipping the very ground on which he is supposed to have trodden, there is still among the Christians of the East a constant tendency to look upon him as a man of flesh. In a community like ours, governed by a universal sentiment of the spiritual character of our Saviour, it would be regarded as setting at defiance the religious impressions of the people even to repeat what is talked of familiarly by the people of the East ; but, at the risk of incurring this reproach, it is necessary, to illustrate their character, to say that I have heard them talk of the Saviour, and of every incident in his history, as a man with whom they had been familiar in his life ; of the Virgin nursing the “ little Jesus ;” of his stature, strength, age, the colour of his hair, his complexion, and of every incident in his life, real or supposed, from his ascension into heaven down to the “ washing of his linen.”

At the foot of the hill, on the borders of the Valley of Jehoshaphat, beneath the Mount of Olives, we came to the Garden of Gethsemane. Like the great battle-grounds where kingdoms have been lost and won, the stubborn earth bears no traces of the scenes that have passed upon its surface; and a stranger might easily pass the Garden of Gethsemane without knowing it as the place where, on the night on which he was betrayed, the Saviour watched with his disciples. It was enclosed by a low, broken stone fence, and an Arab Fellah was quietly turning up the ground with his spade. According to my measurement, the garden is forty-seven paces long and forty-four wide. It contains eight olive-trees, which the monks believe to have been standing in the days of our Saviour, and to which a gentleman, in whose knowledge I have confidence, ascribed an age of more than eight hundred years. One of these, the largest, barked and scarified by the knives of pilgrims, is revered as the identical tree under which Christ was betrayed; and its enormous roots, growing high out of the earth, could induce a belief of almost any degree of antiquity. A little outside the fence of the garden is a stone, revered as marking the hallowed place where Christ, in the agony of his spirit, prayed that the cup might pass from him; a little farther, where he "sweat great drops of blood;" and a little farther is the spot to which he returned, and found the disciples sleeping; and no good pilgrim ever passes from the Garden

of Gethsemane to the Mount of Olives without doing reverence in these holy places.

In company with a long procession of pilgrims, who had been assembling in the garden, we ascended the Mount of Olives. The mount consists of a range of four mountains, with summits of unequal altitudes. The highest rises from the Garden of Gethsemane, and is the one fixed upon as the place of our Saviour's ascension. About half way up is a ruined monastery, built, according to the monks, over the spot where Jesus sat down and wept over the city and uttered that prediction which has since been so fearfully verified. The olive still maintains its place on its native mountain, and now grows spontaneously upon its top and sides, as in the days of David and our Saviour. In a few moments we reached the summit, the view from which embraces, perhaps, more interesting objects than any other in the world; the Valley of Jehoshaphat, the Garden of Gethsemane, and the city of Jerusalem, the Plains of Jericho, the Valley of the Jordan, and the Dead Sea.

On the top of the mountain is a miserable Arab village, in the centre of which is a small octagonal building, erected, it is said, over the spot from which our Saviour ascended into heaven; and the print of his foot, say the monks, is still to be seen. This print is in the rock, enclosed by an oblong border of marble; and pilgrims may at any time be seen taking, in wax, impressions of the holy footstep; and for this, too, they are in-

debted to the research and bounty of the Empress Helena.

Descending again to the ruined monastery, at the place where our Saviour, more than eighteen hundred years ago, wept over the city and predicted its eternal ruin, I sat down on a rough stone to survey and muse over the favoured and fallen Jerusalem. The whole city lay extended before me like a map. I could see and distinguish the streets, and the whole interior to the inner side of the farther wall; and oh! how different from the city of our Saviour's love. Though even then but a mere appendage of imperial Rome, it retained the magnificent wonders of its Jewish kings, and, pre-eminent even among the splendid fanes of heathen worship, rose the proud temple of the great King Solomon. Solomon and all his glory have departed; centuries ago the great temple which he built, the "glory of the whole earth," was a heap of ruins; in the prophetic words of our Saviour, not one stone was left upon another; and, in the wanton spirit of triumph, a conquering general drove his plough over its site. For years its very site lay buried in ruins, till the Saracen came with his terrible war-cry, "The Koran or the sword;" and the great mosque of Omar, the holy of holies in the eyes of all true believers, now rears its lofty dome upon the foundations of the Temple of Solomon.

From the place where I sat, the mosque of Omar was the only object that relieved the general dulness of the city, and all the rest was dark,

monotonous, and gloomy ; no spires reared their tapering points to the skies, nor domes, nor minarets, the pride and ornament of other Turkish cities. All was as still as death ; and the only sign of life that I could see was the straggling figure of a Mussulman, with his slippers in his hand, stealing up the long courtyard to the threshold of the mosque. The mosque of Omar, like the great mosque at Mecca, the birthplace of the Prophet, is regarded with far more veneration than even that of St. Sophia, or any other edifice of the Mohammedan worship ; and to this day the Koran or the sword is the doom of any bold intruder within its sacred precincts. At the northern extremity of the mosque is the Golden Gate, for many years closed, and flanked with a tower, in which a Mussulman soldier is constantly on guard ; for the Turks believe, that, by that gate, the Christians will one day enter and obtain possession of the city—city of mystery and wonder, and still to be the scene of miracles ! “ It shall be trodden down by the Gentiles until the time of the Gentiles be fulfilled ;” and the time shall come when the crescent shall no longer glitter over its battlements, nor the banner of the Prophet wave over its walls.

Returning to the Valley of Jehoshaphat, and passing along its eastern side, we came to the great burying-ground of the Jews. Among its monuments are four, unique in their appearance and construction, and known from time immemorial as the tombs of Absalom, Jehoshaphat, St.

James, and the Prophet Zachariah. All are cut out of the solid rock ; the tomb of Absalom is a single stone, as large as an ordinary two-story house, and ornamented with twenty-four semicolumns of the Doric order, supporting a triangular pyramidal top. The top is battered and defaced ; and no pilgrim, whether Jew or Christian, ever passes through the Valley of Jehoshaphat without casting a stone at the sepulchre of the rebellious son. No entrance to this sepulchre has ever been discovered ; and the only way of getting into the interior is by a hole broken for the purpose in one of the sides.

Behind the tomb of Absalom is that of Jehoshaphat, " the King of Judah, who walked in the ways of the Lord." It is an excavation in the rock, the door being its only ornament. The interior was damp, the water trickling from the walls, and nearly filled with sand and crumbling stones. The next is the tomb of St. James, standing out boldly in the side of the mountain, with a handsome portico of four columns in front, an entrance at the side, and many chambers within. After this is the tomb of Zachariah, like that of Absalom, hewn out of the solid rock ; and like that, too, having no known entrance. Notwithstanding the specific names given to these tombs, it is altogether uncertain to what age they belong ; and it is generally considered that the style of architecture precludes the supposition that they are the work of Jewish builders.

Leaving them after a cursory examination, we

descended the valley ; and, following the now dry bed of the Kedron, we came to "Siloa's Brook, that flowed fast by the oracle of God," which, coming from the foot of Mount Zion, here presents itself as a beautiful stream, and runs winding and murmuring through the valley. Hundreds of pilgrims were stretched on its bank ; and a little above is the sacred pool issuing from the rock, enclosed by stone walls, with a descent by two flights of steps. "Go wash in the Pool of Siloam," said Christ to the man who was born blind ; and, like myself, a number of pilgrims were now bending over the pool and washing in its hallowed waters. Passing by the great tree under which the Prophet Isaiah was sawed asunder, I turned up towards the city, and in a few minutes was standing on Mount Zion.

CHAPTER XII.

The Field of Blood.—A Traveller's Compliment.—Singular Ceremony.—A Ragged Rascal.—Ostentatious Humility.—Pride must have a fall.—An ancient Relic.—Summary Legislation.

ALL that is interesting about Jerusalem may be seen in a few days. My health compelled me to remain there more than three weeks, during which I made two excursions, one to the ancient city of Joppa, and the other to the Dead Sea. As soon as I could do so, however, I visited all the places, to see which is the business of a pilgrim to the holy city. The fourth morning after my arrival I went out at the Bethlehem Gate, and, crossing the valley of the sons of Hinnom, on the side of the opposite mountain I came to the Aceldama, or field of blood, the field bought with "the thirty pieces of silver," which to this day remains a public burying-place or potter's field. A large chamber excavated in the rock is still the charnel-house of the poor and unhonoured dead of Jerusalem. The fabulous account is, that the earth of that field will in forty-eight hours consume the flesh from off the bones committed to it.

Leaving this resting-place of poverty and perhaps of crime, I wandered among the tombs on the sides of the mountain; tombs ornamented

with sculpture, and divided into chambers, the last abodes of the great and rich of Jerusalem ; but the beggar, rudely thrown into the common pit in the potter's field, and the rich man laid by pious hands in the sculptured sepulchre of his ancestors, are alike nothing.

Outside the Damascus Gate, and about half a mile distant, is what is called the Sepulchre of the Kings of Judah. This sepulchre is hewn out of the rock, and has in front a large square excavation, the entrance to which is under a small arch. To the left, on entering, is a large portico, nine paces long and four wide, with an architrave, on which are sculptured fruit and flowers, much defaced ; and at the end, on the left, a hole, filled up with stones and rubbish, barely large enough to enable one to crawl through on hands and knees, leads to a chamber eight paces square ; and from this chamber there are three doors, two directly opposite and one to the right. Entering that to the right, we found ourselves in another chamber, on each of the three sides of which was a large door, with smaller ones on either side, opening to small receptacles, in each of which were places for three bodies. The door of this chamber, now lying on the floor, was a curious work. It had been cut from the solid rock, and made to turn on its hinges or sockets without having ever been removed from its place. On the right, a single door leads down several steps into a dark chamber, where we found the lid of a sarcophagus elegantly carved. The other doors opening from the great

chamber lead to others inferior in size and workmanship. On coming out of one of them, at the very moment when I extinguished my light, the hole of entrance was suddenly darkened and stopped up. I had left a strange Arab at the door ; and remembering the fearful thought that had often come over me while creeping among the tombs in Egypt, of being shut up and entombed alive, my first impulse was to curse my folly in coming into such place, and leaving myself so completely in the power of a stranger. But I was taking the alarm too soon. It was only the Arab himself coming in. He, too, had his apprehensions ; and, from my remaining so long within, began to fear that I had crawled out some back way, and given his bucksheesh the slip.

But enough of the tombs. I leave the abodes of the dead and turn to the living ; and among the living in Jerusalem there are few who live better than the monks. Chateaubriand, in his poetical description of his pilgrimage to the Holy Land, gives an exceeding interest to the character of these monks. "Here reside," said he, "communities of Christian monks whom nothing can compel to forsake the tomb of Christ ; neither plunder, nor personal ill-treatment, nor menaces of death itself. Night and day they chant their hymns around the holy sepulchre. Driven by the cudgel and the sabre, women, children, flocks, and herds, seek refuge in the cloisters of these recluses. What prevents the armed oppressor from pursuing his prey, and overthrowing such feeble

ramparts? The charity of the monks. They deprive themselves of the last resources of life to ransom their suppliants," &c.

The first glance at the well-fed superior of the convent of Jerusalem dispelled in my mind all such poetic illusions, though the beautiful rhapsody was fully appreciated by those of whom it was uttered. On my first interview with the superior, an old monk entered the room who was in the convent at the time of the visit of Chateaubriand, and both said that they had read the accounts of several travellers in the Holy Land, and none could be compared with his. I do not mean to speak harshly of them personally, for they were my hosts, and every Eastern traveller knows the comfort of a cell in a convent compared with any other shelter he can find in the Holy Land. Particularly I would not speak harshly of the superior of the convent at Jerusalem, towards whom I have an exceedingly kind feeling, and with whom I was on terms of rather jocose intimacy. The second time I saw him he railed at me with much good-natured indignation for having taken off two or three inches of my beard ; and, during the whole time I was in Jerusalem, I was in the habit of calling upon him almost every day. I owe him something, too, on Paul's account, for he did that worthy man of all work a most especial honour.

Since our arrival at the convent, Paul had returned to the essence of his Catholic faith, to wit, the strict observance of its forms. In the desert he had often grumbled at being obliged to

go without animal food ; but no sooner did he come within the odour of burning incense, than he felt the enormity of ever having entertained so impious a thought, and set himself down like a martyr to the table of the convent. He was, in his way, an epicure ; and it used to amuse me, while playing before him the breast of a chicken, to see him turn his eyes wistfully towards me, and choke himself upon pulse and beans. He went through it all, however, though with a bad grace ; and his piety was not lost upon the superior, who sent for him a few mornings after our arrival, and told him that a grand ceremony of washing the feet of the disciples was to take place in the chapel, and desired him to officiate as one of them. It was amusing to see Paul's altered manner on his return. With a dignity, and, at the same time, a respect, which he seemed all at once to have acquired from his clear understanding of his relative duties, he asked me whether I could spare him the next afternoon, stating the reason and the honour the superior had done him. I told him, of course, that I would not interfere with his playing such an important part ; and as it would be a new character for him to appear in, I should like to be present at the representation. The next day he came to me with his coat buttoned tight across his breast, his boots polished, and hat smoothed to a hair, and told me, with great gravity, that the superior had sent me his particular compliments, and an invitation to be present at the ceremony ; and turning away, he remarked, with an air of nonchalance, that a Sicilian priest,

who had just left me, and who was arranging to accompany me to the Dead Sea, was to be one of his associates in the ceremony.

Paul was evidently very much lifted up; he was constantly telling Elias, the cook of the convent, that he wanted such and such a thing for to-morrow afternoon; begging me not to make any engagement for to-morrow afternoon; and, in due season, to-morrow afternoon came. I entered my room a little before the time, and found him at rehearsal, with a large tub of water before him, prudently washing his feet beforehand. I was a good deal disposed to bring down his dignity, and told him that it was well enough to rehearse his part, but that he ought to leave at least one foot unwashed, as a sort of bonus for his friend the superior. Paul was a good deal scandalized at my levity of manner, and got out of my reach as soon as he could. Afterward, however, I saw him in one of the corridors, talking with the Sicilian with a greater accession of dignity than ever. I saw him again in the chapel of the convent, standing in line with his associates; and, excepting him, the Sicilian priest, and one monk, who was put in to fill up, I never saw a set of harder-looking scoundrels.

This ceremony of washing the feet of the disciples, intended by our Saviour as a beautiful lesson of humility, is performed from year to year, ostensibly to teach the same lesson; and in this case the humility of the superior was exalted shamefully at the expense of the disciples. Most of the twelve would have come under the mean-

ing, though inexplicable term of "loafer;" but one, a vagrant Pole, was, beyond all peradventure, the greatest blackguard I ever saw. A black muslin frock-coat, dirty and glossy from long use, buttoned tight across the breast, and reaching down to his ancles, and an old, foxy, low-crowned hat, too big for him, and almost covering his eyes and ears, formed his entire dress, for he had no trousers, shoes, or shirt; he was snub-nosed, pock-marked, and sore-eyed; wore a long beard, and probably could not remember the last time he had washed his face; think, then, of his feet. If Paul had been dignified, *he* was puffed up almost to bursting; and the self-complacency with which he looked upon himself and all around him was admirable beyond description. By great good fortune for my designs against Paul, the Pole stood next and before him in the line of the *quasi* disciples; and it was refreshing to turn from the consequential and complacent air of the one to the crestfallen look of the other; and to see him, the moment he caught my eye, with a suddenness that made me laugh, turn his head to the other side; but he had hardly got it there before he found me on that side too; and so I kept him watching and dodging, and in a perpetual fidget. To add to his mortification, the Pole seemed to take particularly to him; and as he was before him in the line, was constantly turning round and speaking to him with a patronising air; and I capped the climax of his agony by going up in a quiet way, and asking him who was

the gentleman before him. I could see him wince, and for a moment I thought of letting him alone ; but he was often on stilts, and I seldom had such an opportunity of pulling him down. Besides, it was so ludicrous, I could not help it. If I had had any one with me to share the joke, it would have been exquisite. As it was, when I saw his determination to dodge me, I neglected everything else, and devoted myself entirely to him ; and, let the poor fellow turn where he would, he was sure to find me leaning against a pillar, with a smile on my face and my eyes intently fixed upon him ; occasionally I would go up and ask him some question about his friend before him ; and finally, as if I could not joke about it any more, and felt on my own account the indignity offered to him, I told him that, if I were he, I would not stand it any longer ; that I was ashamed to see him with such a pack of rascals ; that they had made a cat's-paw of him, and advised him to run for it, saying that I would stand by him against a bull from the pope. He now spoke for the first time, and told me that he had been thinking of the same thing ; and, by degrees, actually worked himself up to the desperate pitch of incurring the hazard of excommunication, if it must needs be so, and had his shoes and stockings in his hands ready for a start, when I brought him down again by telling him it would soon be over ; and, though he had been shamefully treated, that he might cut the gentleman next to him whenever he pleased.

After goading him as long as he could possibly bear, I left him to observe the ceremony. At the upper end of the chapel, placed there for the occasion, was a large chair, with a gilded frame and velvet back and cushion, intended as the seat of the nominal disciple. Before it was a large copper vase, filled with water, and a plentiful sprinkling of rose-leaves; and before that, a large red velvet cushion, on which the superior kneeled to perform the office of lavation. I need not suggest how inconsistent was this display of gold, rose-water, and velvet, with the humble scene it was intended to represent; but the tinsel and show imposed upon the eyes for which they were intended.

One after the other the disciples came up, seated themselves in the chair, and put their feet in the copper vase. The superior kneeled upon the cushion, with both his hands washed the right foot, wiped it with a clean towel, kissed it, and then held it in his hands to receive the kisses of the monks, and of all volunteers that offered. All went on well enough until it came to the turn of Paul's friend and forerunner, the doughty Pole. There was a general titter as he took his place in the chair; and I saw the superior and the monk who assisted him hold down their heads and laugh almost convulsively. The Pole seemed to be conscious that he was creating a sensation; and that all eyes were upon him, and sat with his arms folded, with an ease and self-complacency altogether indescribable, looking down in the

vase, and turning his foot in the superior's hands, heel up, toe up, so as to facilitate the process; and when the superior had washed and kissed it, and was holding it up for others to kiss, he looked about him with all the grandeur of a monarch in the act of coronation. Keeping his arms folded, he fairly threw himself back into the huge chair, looking from his foot to the monks, and from the monks to his foot again, as one to whom the world had nothing more to offer. It was more than a minute before any one would venture upon the perilous task of kissing those very suspicious toes, and the monk who was assisting the superior had to go round and drum them up; though he had already kissed it once in the way of his particular duty, to set an example he kissed it a second time; and now, as if ashamed of their backwardness, two or three rushed forward at once; and, the ice once broken, the effect seemed electric, and there was a greater rush to kiss his foot than there had been to any of the others.

It was almost too hard to follow Paul after this display. I ought to have spared him, but I could not. His mortification was in proportion to his predecessor's pride. He was sneaking up to the chair, when, startled by some noise, he raised his head, and caught the eye which, above all others, he would have avoided. A broad laugh was on my face; and poor Paul was so discomfited that he stumbled, and came near pitching headlong into the vase. I could not

catch his eye again ; he seemed to have resigned himself to the worst. I followed him round in the procession, as he thrice made the tour of the chapel and corridors, with a long lighted candle in his hand ; and then we went down to the superior's room, where the monks, the superior, the twelve, and myself, were entertained with coffee. As the Pole, who had lagged behind, entered after we were all seated, the superior, with the humour of a good fellow, cried out, " Viva Polacca !" all broke out into a loud laugh, and Paul escaped in the midst of it. About an hour afterward I met him outside the Damascus Gate. Even then he would have shunned me ; but I called him, and, to his great relief, neither then nor at any other time referred to the washing of the feet of the disciples.

The reader may remember the kindness with which I had been received by the chief rabbi at Hebron. His kindness did not end there ; a few days after my arrival, the chief rabbi of Jerusalem, the high-priest of the Jews in the city of their ancient kings, called upon me, accompanied by a Gibraltar Jew, who spoke English, and who told me that they had come, at the request of my friend in Hebron, to receive and welcome me in the city of their fathers. I had already seen a great deal of the Jews. I had seen them in the cities of Italy, everywhere more or less oppressed ; at Rome, shut up every night in their miserable quarters as if they were noxious beasts ; in Tur-

key, persecuted and oppressed ; along the shores of the Black Sea and in the heart of Russia, looked down upon by the serfs of that great empire of vassalage ; and for the climax of misery, I had seen them contemned and spit upon even by the ignorant and enslaved boors of Poland. I had seen them scattered abroad among all nations, as it had been foretold they would be, everywhere a separate and peculiar people ; and everywhere, under all poverty, wretchedness, and oppression, waiting for, and anxiously expecting, the coming of a Messiah, to call together their scattered tribes and restore them to the kingdom of their fathers ; and all this the better fitted me for the more interesting spectacle of the Jews in the holy city. In all changes and revolutions, from the day when the kingdom of Solomon passed into the hands of strangers, under the Assyrian, the Roman, the Arab, and the Turk, a remnant of that once-favoured people has always hovered around the holy city ; and now, as in the days of David, old men may be seen at the foot of Mount Zion, teaching their children to read from that mysterious book on which they ever fondly built their hopes of a temporal and eternal kingdom.

The friends made for me by the rabbi at Hebron were the very friends above all others whom I would have selected for myself. While the Christians were preparing for the religious ceremonies of Easter, the Jews were making ready for the great feast of the Passover ; and one of the first offers of kindness they made me, was an

invitation to wait and partake of it with them. The rabbi was an old man, nearly seventy, with a long white beard, and Aaron himself need not have been ashamed of such a representative. I would have preferred to attach myself particularly to him; but, as I could speak neither Arabic nor Hebrew, and the English Jew was not willing to play second, and served merely as interpreter, I had but little benefit of the old man's society.

The Jews are the best topographers in Jerusalem, although their authority ends where the great interest of the city begins; for, as their fathers did before them, they deny the name of Christ, and know nothing of the holy places so anxiously sought for by the Christians. That same morning they took me to what they call a part of the wall of Solomon's temple. It forms part of the southern wall of the mosque of Omar, and is evidently older than the rest, the stones being much larger, measuring nine or ten feet long; and I saw that day, as other travellers may still see every Friday in the year, all the Jews in Jerusalem clothed in their best raiment, winding through the narrow streets of their quarter; and under this hallowed wall, with the sacred volume in their hands, singing, in the language in which they were written, the Songs of Solomon and the Psalms of David. White-bearded old men and smooth-cheeked boys were leaning over the same book; and Jewish maidens, in their long white robes, were standing with their faces against the

wall, and praying through cracks and crevices. The tradition which leads them to pray *through* this wall is, that during the building of the temple a cloud rested over it so as to prevent any entrance; and Solomon stood at the door, and prayed that the cloud might be removed, and promised that the temple should be always open to men of every nation desiring to offer up prayers; whereupon the Lord removed the cloud, and promised that the prayers of all people offered up in that place should find acceptance in his sight; and now, as the Mussulman lords it over the place where the temple stood, and the Jews are not permitted to enter, they endeavour to insinuate their prayers through the crevices in the wall, that thus they may rise from the interior to the Throne of Grace. The tradition is characteristic, and serves to illustrate the devoted constancy with which the Israelites adhere to the externals of their faith.

Returning to the convent, and passing through one of the bazaars, we saw an Arab mounted on a bench, and making a proclamation to the crowd around him; and my friend, the Gibraltar Jew, was immediately among them, listening earnestly. The subject was one that touched his tenderest sensibilities as a dealer in money; for the edict proclaimed was one changing the value of the current coin, reducing the tallah-ree or dollar from twenty-one to twenty piastres, commanding all the subjects of Mohammed Aly to take it at that value, and concluding with the usual finale

of a Turkish proclamation, "Death to the offender." My Jew, as he had already told me several times, was the richest Israelite in Jerusalem, and consequently took a great interest in everything that related to money. He told me that he always cultivated an intimacy with the officer of the mint; and by giving him an occasional present, he always got intimation of any intended change in time to save himself. We parted at the door of the convent, having arranged that I should go with him the next day to the synagogue, and afterward dine at his house.

CHAPTER XIII.

The Synagogue.—Ideal Speculation.—A Ride in the Rain.—
An Ex-official.—Joppa.—A Moral Phenomenon.—Reverence for the Grave.

ABOUT nine o'clock the next morning I was with the Jew, and in a few moments we were sitting in the highest seats in the synagogue, at the foot of Mount Zion. My old friend the rabbi was in the desk, reading to a small remnant of the Israelites the same law which had been read to their fathers on the same spot ever since they came up out of the land of Egypt. And there they sat, where their fathers had sat, before them, with high, black, square-topped caps, with shawls wound around, crossed in front, and laid very neatly; long gowns fastened with a sash, and long beards, the feeble remnant of a mighty people; there was sternness in their faces, but in their hearts a spirit of patient endurance, and a firm and settled resolution to die and be buried under the shadow of their fallen temple.

By the Jewish law, the men and women sit apart in the synagogues; and, as I could not understand the words of exhortation which fell from the lips of the preacher, it was not altogether unnatural that I should turn from the rough-bearded

sons of Abraham to the smooth faces of their wives and daughters. Since I left Europe, I had not been in an apartment where the women sat with their faces uncovered; and, under these circumstances, it is not surprising that I saw many a dark-eyed Jewess who appeared well worthy of my gaze; and it is not a vain boast to say, that while singing the songs of Solomon, many a Hebrew maiden turned her bright black orbs upon me; for, in the first place, on entering we had disturbed more than a hundred sitting on the steps; secondly, my original dress, half Turk, half Frank, attracted the eyes even of the men; and, thirdly, the alleged universal failing of the sex is not wanting among the daughters of Judah.

The service over, we stopped a moment to look at the synagogue, which was a new building, with nothing about it that was peculiar or interesting. It had no gold or silver ornaments; and the sacred scroll, the table of the Law, contained in the holy of holies, was all that the pride of the Jew could show. My friend, however, did not put his own light under a bushel; for, telling me the amount he had himself contributed to the building, he conducted me to a room built at his own expense for a schoolroom, with a stone in the front wall recording his name and generosity.

We then returned to his house; and, being about to sit down to dinner with him, I ought to introduce him more particularly to the reader. He was a man about fifty-five, born in Gibraltar to the same abject poverty which is the lot of

most of his nation. In his youth he had been fortunate in his little dealings, and had been what we call an enterprising man; for he had twice made a voyage to England, and was so successful, and liked the country so much, that he always called himself an Englishman. Having accumulated a little property, or, as he expressed it, having become very rich, he gratified the darling wish of his heart by coming to Jerusalem, to die and be buried with his fathers in the Valley of Jehoshaphat. But this holy purpose in regard to his death and burial did not make him undervalue the importance of life, and the advantages of being a great man now. He told me that he was rich, very rich; that he was the richest, and in fact, the only rich Jew in Jerusalem. He took me through his house, and showed me his gold and silver ornaments, and talked of his money and the uses he made of it; that he lent to the Latin Convent on *interest*, without any security, whenever they wanted; but as for the Greeks—he laughed, laid his finger on his nose, and said he had in pledge jewels belonging to them of the value of more than twenty thousand dollars. He had had his losses too; and while we were enjoying the luxuries of his table, the leaven of his nature broke out, and he endeavoured to sell me a note for fifteen hundred pounds, of the Lady Esther Stanhope, which he offered at a discount of fifty per cent.; a bargain which I declined, as being out of the line of my business.

I remember once the American fever came

upon me in Athens, when, sitting among the ruins of the Acropolis, upon a broken column of the Parthenon, I speculated upon the growth of the city. I bought in imagination, a piece of ground, and laid it out in lots, lithographed, and handsomely painted red, blue, and white, like the maps of Chicago, Dunkirk, and Hinsdale; built up the ancient harbour of the Piræus, and ran a railroad to the foot of the Acropolis; and I leaned my head upon my hand, and calculated the immense increase in value that must attend the building of the king's new palace, and the erection of a royal residence on the site of Plato's academy. I have since regretted that I did not "go in" for some up-town lots in Athens; but I have never regretted not having shaved the note of the Queen of the East, in the hands of the richest Jew in Jerusalem.

It was Saturday, the Jewish Sabbath. The command to do no work on the Sabbath day is observed by every Jew as strictly as when the commandment was given to his fathers; and to such an extent was it obeyed in the house of my friend, that it was not considered allowable to extinguish a lamp which had been lighted the night before, and was now burning in broad daylight over our table. This extremely strict observance of the law at first gave me some uneasiness about my dinner; but my host, with great self-complacency, relieved me from all apprehensions, by describing the admirable contrivance he had invented for reconciling appetite and duty—

an oven, heated the night before to such a degree that the process of cooking was continued during the night, and the dishes were ready when wanted the next day. I must not forget the Jew's family, which consisted of a second wife, about sixteen, already the mother of two children, and his son and son's wife, the husband twelve, and the wife ten years old. The little gentleman was at the table, and behaved very well, except that his father had to check him in eating sweetmeats. The lady was playing on the floor with other children, and I did with her what I could not have done with a 'bigger man's wife—I took her on my knee and kissed her. Among the Jews, matches are made by the parents; and, immediately upon the marriage, the wife is brought into the household of the husband. A young gentleman was tumbling about the floor who was engaged to the daughter of the chief rabbi. I did not ask the age of the lady, of course; but the gentleman bore the heavy burden of three years. He had not yet learned to whisper the story of his love to his blushing mistress, for, in fact, he could not talk at all; he was a great bawling boy, and cared much more for his bread and butter than a wife; but his prudent father had already provided him.

On the morning of the twenty-first I set out for Jaffa, the ancient Joppa. It was a bright and beautiful morning when I left the Bethlehem Gate; but, before I had been an hour on my way, it began to rain, and continued nearly the whole

day. About three hours from Jerusalem we came to the village of Abougos, the chief of the most powerful families of Fellahs in the Holy Land. Nearly all his life he had been more or less in arms against the government; and his name was known among all the Christians in the East as the robber of the pilgrims to the Holy Sepulchre. I had met and spoken with him outside of the walls of Jerusalem, and during the rain, as I approached his village, I determined to stop and throw myself upon his hospitality for the night; but the returning sunshine deceived me, and I passed on, admiring the appearance of his village, which had much the best of any I had seen in the Holy Land. About an hour afterward I was repenting, under a merciless rain, that I had not fulfilled my purpose. Riding three hours longer, stopping from time to time under a rock or tree, I was ascending the last range of mountains; before me were the fertile plains of Sharon; and across the plain, still at a great distance, was Ramla, the ancient Arimathea, the city of "Joseph the counsellor, the good man, and just." To the right, bordering the sea, was the range of Mount Carmel; but the rain was pelting in my eyes so that I could see nothing of it. I had been eight hours on the back of one of the most stubborn mules that ever persisted in having their own way; toiling with all my might, with blows and kicks, but finding it impossible to make him move one step faster than he pleased; and when the tower, the mosque, and the minaret of Ramla

were before me, at the other side of a level plain, and an hour's smart riding would have carried me there, I was completely worn out with urging the obstinate brute ; and with muttered threats of future vengeance, wound my cloak around me, and hauling my umbrella close down, and grinding my teeth, I tried to think myself resigned to my fate. A strong wind was driving the rain directly in my face, and my mule, my cursed mule, stopped moving when I stopped beating ; and, in the very hardest of the storm, when I would have rushed like a bird on the wing, turned off from the path, and fell quietly to browsing on the grass. Afraid to disarrange my umbrella and cloak, I sat for a moment irresolute ; but the brute turned his face round, and looked at me with such perfect nonchalance, that I could not stand it. I raised my club for a blow ; the wind opened my cloak in front, puffing it out like a sail ; caught under my umbrella, and turned it inside out ; and the mule suddenly starting, under a deluge of rain I found myself planted in the mud on the plains of Sharon. An hour afterward I was drying my clothes in the house of our consular agent at Ramla. There was no fire-place in the room ; but I was hovering over a brazier of burning charcoal. I spent that night and all the next day in Ramla, although a quarter of an hour would have been sufficient to see all that it contained, which was simply nothing more than is to be found in any other village. The consul gave me a dry coverlet ; and while some of his

friends came in to look at and welcome the stranger, I laid myself down upon the divan and went to sleep.

The next morning I was unable to move ; the fatigue, and particularly the rain of the preceding day, had been too much for me, and I remained all the morning in an up-stairs room, with a high ceiling and a stone floor, lying on a rug in one corner, cold, desponding, and miserable. In the afternoon I went down into the large room, to talk with the consular agent. But a year before he had flourished in all the pomp and pride of office. The arms of our country were blazoned over his door, and the stars and stripes had protected his dwelling ; but a change had come over him. The Viceroy of Syria had ordered the flags of the consuls to be taken down at Ramla, and forbidden any of his subjects to hold the office except in the seaport towns. I could not help thinking that he was perfectly right, as it was merely allowing them the benefit of a foreign protection, to save them and their families, with two or three janizaries, from their duties to himself ; but I listened attentively to the complaints of the poor agent. His dignity had been touched, and his pride humbled in the eyes of his townsmen ; for the governor had demanded the usual duty from his sons, and had sent his executive officers with the summary order, the duty or the bastinado. The agent owed his appointment to Commodore Patterson ; and talked of him and Captain Nicholson as friends who would see justice

done him if he could communicate with them. I was afterwards struck with a display of delicacy and a sense of propriety that I had not expected from him; for, although he charged me with many messages to Commodore Patterson, he requested me not to mention his difficulties in the matter of the agency, as he had already made representations to the consul at Beyroot, who had laid them before Commodore Porter at Constantinople; and an application in another quarter would look like distrusting their ability, or their willingness to resent what he called an indignity offered to the American flag. Annoyed at seeing the women dodging by, with their faces covered, and always avoiding me, I told him that, being a Christian and holding an appointment under our government, he ought to conform to our customs, and treat his women more as companions; or, at least, to let them come into the same room, and sit at the same table with him. He listened, but could not see any reason in my proposition. He said it might do for us; for with us the wives always brought their husbands money, (the ignorant, uninformed barbarian,) but in Syria (he sighed as he said it) they never added a para to the riches of their lords.

The next morning I set out again for Jaffa. The road lies through a rich plain; and in three hours, passing a large detachment of Turkish soldiers, encamped outside, and waiting a transport to carry them to Alexandria, I was entering the gate of the ancient city of Joppa. Believed

to have existed before the deluge, the city where Noah dwelt and built his ark ; whence Jonah embarked for Tarshish, when he was thrown overboard and swallowed by a whale ; the port used by Solomon to receive timber from Tyre for the building of the temple, and by all the kings of Judah to connect the city of Jerusalem with foreign people, Jaffa is now a small Turkish town on the shores of the Mediterranean, built on a little eminence projecting into the sea, and containing a population of from ten to fifteen thousand Turks, Arabs, Jews, and Christians. It has a fine climate, and a fine country around it ; and the orange-gardens are the finest on the shores of the Mediterranean. Although the seaport of Jerusalem, its harbour has always been bad ; and when I was there the wreck of a Turkish man-of-war was lying on the beach ; and that same night, there being a severe storm, the little Greek pilgrim vessels were considered in great danger.

There is nothing of interest in the modern city of Jaffa. Its history is connected with the past. The traveller must stand on the shore, and fill the little harbour with the ships of Tarshish, or imagine Noah entering the ark with his family, by whom the earth was to be repeopled ; or wander through the narrow streets and ask himself, where is the house of Tabitha, whom Peter “raised from the dead ?” or that of Simon the tanner, where Peter “tarried many days ?” and he may feel a less holy, but hardly less powerful interest, in standing by the gate where, for many years, a

large pyramid of skulls attested the desperate struggle of Napoleon ; or, in walking through the chambers of the Greek convent, then used as a hospital for the French, and the monks will show him an apartment where, when all hearts were sinking within them for fear, he visited and touched the sick of the plague, restored the drooping courage of his soldiers, and almost raised the dying from their bed of death.

Besides the interest attached to this place by reason of its great antiquity, and the many important events of which it has been the scene, I remember it with much kindness on account of the American consular agent, and the cordial manner in which he received me. He was not at home when I arrived ; but in a few moments he came in, and, taking both my hands in his, pointed to the American arms on the wall, ordered the stars and stripes to be hoisted on the top of his house, and, with all the extravagance of the East, told me that all he had was mine. I had a great mind to take him at his word, and begin by appropriating a beautiful emerald that I saw on his finger ; but, for the present, I contented myself with asking merely for a dinner, which was soon prepared ; and I sat down to dine in the ancient city of Joppa, with my country's arms before me, and my country's banner waving above.

The agent was an Armenian, and a strict observer of all the requisitions of his exacting creed ; he was rich, and had no children ; and, what I

never before heard from the lips of man, he said that he was perfectly happy. I was the first American who had visited him since he had received his appointment; and it seemed as if he could not do enough for me. He had repaired and reconstructed the whole road from Jaffa to Jerusalem; and when I asked him what reward he promised himself for this, he answered that he had done it for God, the pilgrims, and his own honour. I remained with him that night, and would have gone early the next morning, but he would not part with me so soon; I dined with him again; and in the afternoon, escorted to the gate by two janizaries, each with a large silver-headed mace in his hand, I left, probably for ever, my Armenian friend and the ancient city of Joppa. I do not know when I parted from a man with more regret.*

I slept that night at Ramla; and the next day, about four o'clock, in company with several hundred pilgrims, I was again entering the Bethlehem Gate. Notwithstanding the munificence of my Armenian friend, the road from Jerusalem to Jaffa, a road travelled from the time when Jonas went thither to embark for Tarshish, is now a mere mule-path, on which I was several times obliged to stop and turn aside to let a loaded mule pass by.

I had seen everything in Jerusalem that it was the duty of a traveller to see. My time was now

* The town of Jaffa has since been destroyed by an earthquake; and of fifteen thousand inhabitants, thirteen thousand were buried in the ruins. Has my Armenian friend escaped?

my own, for idling, lounging, or strolling, in the luxurious consciousness of having nothing to do. In this humour I used to set forth from the convent, never knowing where I should go or what I should do ; and, whenever I went out with the deliberate intention of doing nothing, I was always sure of finding enough to occupy me. My favourite amusement in the morning was to go out by St. Stephen's Gate, and watch the pilgrims as they began their daily round of visits to the holy places. Frequently, if I saw a group that interested me, I followed them to the Garden of Gethsemane and the Mount of Olives ; sometimes I stopped in the Valley of Jehoshaphat, and, sitting down on the grave of an Israelite, watched the Jewish pilgrims. One morning, I remember, Paul and I were together ; and we saw a young girl kissing the tomb of Zachariah, and weeping as if her heart would break. Paul asked her, rather roughly, what she was crying about ; and the poor girl, looking at him for a moment, burst into a flood of tears, and told him that she was weeping over the tomb of the blessed prophet.

But there are few things connected with my journeying in the Holy Land which I look back upon with a more quiet satisfaction than my often repeated and almost daily walk around the walls of Jerusalem. It was a walk of between three and four miles ; and I always contrived, about half an hour before the gates were closed, to be sitting on a favourite tombstone near St. Stephen's Gate. The great Turkish burying-ground is out-

side the wall, near this gate ; and regularly, on a fine afternoon, towards sunset, the whole Turkish population, in all their gay and striking costumes, might be seen wandering among the tombs. Few things strike a traveller in the East more than this, and few are to us more inexplicable. We seldom go into a graveyard except to pay the last offices to a departed friend, and for years afterward we never find ourselves in the same place again without a shade of melancholy coming over us. Not so in the East ; to-day they bury a friend, to-morrow they plant flowers over his grave, and the next day, and the next, they tend and water them, and once a week, regularly, they sit by the grave. On every holiday it is a religious duty to go there ; and as often as they walk out for health or pleasure, they habitually turn their footsteps to the burial-ground. To them the grave is not clothed with the same terrors. It is not so dark and gloomy as to us. They are firmer believers than we are, though, as we think, in a false and fatal creed ; and to them there is a light beyond the grave, which we of a better faith can seldom see. It was a beautiful picture to behold the graveyard thronged with Turkish women in their long white veils. It would, perhaps, be too poetical to look upon them all as mourners. Perhaps, indeed, it would not be too much to say that, of the immense multitude who, day after day, are seen flitting among the tombs, many a widowed fair one, over the tomb of a dead lord, is dreaming of a living lover.

But there was one whom I noticed every day ; she was always sitting by the same stone, and I always noticed her as one of the first to come out and one of the last to return. She was a young Sciote girl, mourning over the tomb of her young lord ; and well she might, for he had been to her a friend and protector, and she had been his only bride. When her father's house was laid in ruins, and her grey-headed sire and her manly brothers were slain before her eyes, he had saved her from the bloody cimeter, or from a fate worse than death ; and he had wooed her, not as a Turk and master, but as a lover. He had won her young heart ; and she had forgotten her kindred and her country ; he had died with his bloody cimeter in his hand, and she thought only of the dead when she stood beside his grave.

CHAPTER XIV.

Desert of St. John. — A Midnight Procession. — Road to Jericho. — A Community of Women. — A Navigator of the Dead Sea. — A Dance by Moonlight. — A rude Lodging.

IN company with Mr. Whiting, I started for the Desert of St. John the Baptist. Passing the Pool of Gihon, where Saul was anointed king by Zadoc and Nathan, we came to the Convent of the Holy Cross, the great altar of the chapel being erected, as the monks pretend, over the spot where grew the tree from which the cross was made. Moving on among hills and valleys, on our right was a distant view of Ramah, the country of Samuel the seer; and before us, crowning the very top of a high hill, were the ruins of the palace and the burial-place of the warlike Maccabees. The Convent of St. John is built on the spot where John the Baptist was born. There is no doubt of this, say the monks; for beneath the great altar of the church is a circular slab of marble, with an inscription almost effaced: "Hic natus est precursor Dei," here the forerunner of the Lord was born. This convent is in a fine situation; a small Christian village is attached to it; the top commands a beautiful view of the mountains, cultivated in terraces; and directly in front is the great Valley

of Turpentine, or Elah, the battle-ground of the Israelites and Philistines, of David and Goliath. Taking a Christian boy with us as a guide, we entered the valley ; and, following the stream to its source, in about two hours we came to the place where, it is said, Saul and the men of Israel pitched by the Valley of Elah, and set the battle in array against the Philistines. It was precisely the spot where the scene, so graphically recorded in Scripture, might have taken place. “ And the Philistines stood on a mountain on the one side, and Israel stood on a mountain on the other side, and there was a valley between them.” On each side of me was a mountain, and the brook was still running near from which the shepherd-boy gathered the five smooth stones. The boy who accompanied us told me that the precise stones had never yet been found, though the monks had often searched for them.

At the extreme end of the valley is the Desert of St. John, where was heard, for the first time, the voice of one crying in the wilderness, “ Prepare ye the way of the Lord ; make his paths straight.” Directly in front, at the top of the mountain bounding the valley, is an open door in the rock, leading to the grotto in which the prophet lived. There is no appearance of a desert in this place, except solitude ; and if it be merely a locality fixed upon by the monks, they could not have selected one more inappropriate. It is one of the prettiest and best cultivated spots in the Holy Land ; and sitting in the door of the grotto,

with an Armenian pilgrim by my side, and looking out upon the valley and the mountains, all around terraced and cultivated to the very summits, all still and beautiful, I thought I had never seen a place better qualified to inspire a pious, philosophic, and happy state of mind, than this Desert of St. John. We returned by a different road, searching on our way for the pool where Philip baptized the eunuch of Queen Candace ; but, after losing ourselves once or twice, and fearing a threatening shower, we returned to the city unsuccessful.

At about ten o'clock that evening, the monks, under a guard of soldiers and a crowd of pilgrims, each with a candle in his hand, left St. Stephen's Gate in solemn procession. With a loud chant they crossed the Valley of Jehoshaphat, wound around the foot of the Mount of Olives to Bethpage and Bethany, said mass in the tomb of Lazarus, and returning, prayed and chanted on the Mount of Olives and in the Garden of Gethsemane ; and at about daylight the next morning returned to the convent.

For several days I had been preparing for a journey to the Dead Sea ; but a mysterious influence seemed still to hang about the borders of that water ; and now, when all the rest of the Holy Land was perfectly tranquil, the Fellahs were in commotion among the barren mountains around

it. I had waited two or three days at the request of the governor; but, hearing of nothing in particular to prevent me, I determined to set out. The Sicilian priest, who had proposed to accompany me, could not go; and at about eight o'clock I was sitting on my horse alone, outside the St. Stephen's Gate, waiting for Paul, who had gone to the governor for a letter, which he had promised me to the Aga of Jericho. Attracted by the uncommon beauty of the morning, half the population of Jerusalem had already gathered without the walls. Joining a party of pilgrims, I followed once more the path I had so often trodden across the Brook Kedron and the Valley of Jehoshaphat; and, parting with them at the foot of the Mount of Olives, I wound around its base, and fell into the road to Jericho and the Jordan. We must have passed Bethpage, though there is nothing to mark where it stood; and in about an hour we came to Bethany, now a ruined Arab village, though the monks still show the house of Martha and Mary, the tomb of Lazarus, and even the barren fig-tree which was cursed by our Lord. The tomb of Lazarus is a large excavation in the rock, and the sepulchral chamber is at the foot of a staircase of ten or twelve steps.

Not far from Bethany we came to a fountain enclosed with marble, and soon after to a valley, where, the monks say, our Saviour, in coming from beyond the Jordan, at the prayer of the sisters of Lazarus, reposed with the disciples. In about two hours we were among the mountains.

The scene every moment became wilder and more rugged ; and, except in the wilderness of Sinai and among the wastes of Idumea, I never travelled so dreary a road as in " going down to Jericho." It is on this desolate route that our Saviour lays the scene of the parable of the good Samaritan ; and nowhere could a more forcible illustration be given of the heartlessness of the priest and the Levite, in " passing by on the other side." Ascending for some distance by the precipitous side of a yawning chasm, where a false movement of my horse might have dashed me to atoms, from the top of the Mountains of Desolation I looked to the left upon a higher and still wilder and more dreary range ; and, towering above all the rest, in gloomy grandeur, its naked sides pierced with doors for the cells of hermits, was the mountain of our Saviour's fasting and temptation ; before me were the plains of Jericho, the Valley of the Jordan, the mountains of Arabia, and the Dead Sea. A high, square building, like a tower, marked the site of Jericho, and a small stream running between two banks of sand, was the hallowed Jordan.

Descending the mountain, on our left, directly at the foot, were the remains of an aqueduct and other ruins, which, in all probability, were part of the ancient city of Jericho. The plain commences at the foot of the mountains ; the land is fertile, and well watered with streams emptying into the Jordan, but for the most part wild and uncultivated. About half way across we passed the edge of a stagnant pool, nearly covering a Mussulman

burying-ground; the tombstones were washed from their places, and here and there the ghastly skeletons were visible above the muddy water. In one place, crossing a stream, we met three Abyssinians, who had come from the remotest point in the interior of Africa where the name of Christian is known, to bathe in the sacred Jordan. Two or three times we were obstructed by brick fences, intended as ramparts, to protect the inhabitants and their flocks against the incursions of wolves; and at about four o'clock we arrived at the ruined village of Jericho.

I have observed that travellers generally, when they arrive at any place of extraordinary interest, find the right glow of feeling coming over them precisely at the proper moment. I never had any difficulty in Italy; for there, in the useful guidebook of Madame Starke, beautifully interspersed with valuable information about hotels, post-horses, and the price of washing linen, the reader may find prepared for him an appropriate catalogue of sensations for almost every possible situation and object, from a walk in the Coliseum by moonlight to a puppet-show at San Carlino in Naples; but, in a country like this, a man is thrown upon his own resources; and, notwithstanding the interest attached to the name of Jericho, I found it a hard matter to feel duly excited.

Jericho was the first city in Canaan which fell into the hands of the Israelites. It was long the second city of Judea, and, according to the Jewish

Talmud, contained twelve thousand priests. It had its hippodrome and amphitheatre, and in its royal palace Herod the Tetrarch died. But the curse of Joshua seems to rest upon it now: "Cursed be the man before the Lord who shall rebuild Jericho." It consists of fifty or sixty miserable Arab houses, the walls of which on three sides are of stones, piled up like the stone fences of our farmers, most of them not so high as a man's head, and the front and top either entirely open or covered with brush.

The old fortress, in which I expected to sleep, I found entirely abandoned, and the apartments used as a shelter for sheep and goats. I expected to find there the aga, quietly smoking his pipe, and glad to receive and gossip with a stranger; but I had mounted to the top, and looked out upon the extensive plains of Jericho and the Valley of the Jordan without meeting a single person; and it was not until I had gone out of the gate, and, with the bridle in my hand, was walking back into the village, that I noticed the remarkable circumstance, so different from the usual course of matters in Arab villages, that no throng of idlers had gathered around me. In fact, I had passed through the village, gone to the fortress, and come back, without seeing a man; and soon found that there was not a male in the village above ten years old, except the aga, and one passing Arab. It had numbered sixty men, of whom Ibrahim Pacha had ordered a levy of twenty-four for his army. The miserable in-

habitants had decided among themselves upon nineteen who could best be spared ; and, unable to supply the rest, in a spirit of desperation had abandoned their village ; and, taking with them all the boys above ten years old, fled to the mountains around the Dead Sea, where they were now in arms, ripe for rebellion, robbery, and murder.

I found myself very much at a loss ; the aga was a stranger there, and knew nothing of the localities ; and I could not find a boy old enough to conduct me to the Well of Elisha. Some of the women knew where it was, but they would not go with me, though I asked them in all courtesy ; and, taking my direction from them, and fixing my eyes on the naked top of the mountain of our Saviour's temptation, in about half an hour I reached the miraculous fountain where, at the request of the men of Jericho, Elisha " cast salt into the spring and healed the water." It is enclosed in a large marble basin, and several streams, constantly running from it, refresh and fertilize the plains of Jericho. Riding on a short distance further, I came to an aqueduct and the ruins of a Greek convent, at the base of the " exceeding high mountain," from whose top the devil showed our Saviour all the kingdoms of the world. The naked sides of the mountain are studded with doors, opening to the cells of anchorites and hermits, who there turned their backs upon temptation, and, amid desolation and solitude, passed their days in penance and prayer.

It was dark when I returned to Jericho. Be-

fore going away, the aga had taken me to his hut, and wished me to pass the night with him; but, as two horses had already taken their places before me, and the hut was perfectly open, having merely a roof of branches, and nothing at all in front, I had looked round and selected another for my lodging-place, chiefly from the circumstance of its having a small boat set up on its side before it, so as to form a front wall.

That boat told a melancholy tale. It was the only one that had ever floated on the Dead Sea. About eight months before, Mr. Costigan, an Irish traveller, who had been some years in the East, had projected a most interesting journey, and, most unhappily for himself and the interests of science, died almost in the moment of its successful accomplishment. He had purchased his boat at Beyroot, and, with a Maltese sailor for his servant, in spite of many difficulties and impediments from the Arabs, had carried it across the country on a dromedary, and launched it on the Sea of Galilee; he had explored this most interesting water, and entering the Jordan, followed it down until he narrowly escaped with his life among the rocks and rapids of that ancient but unknown river; and then constantly obstructed by the Arabs, even the governor of Damascus refusing him any facilities, with great difficulty he succeeded in bringing his boat by land to the Dead Sea. In the middle of July he had embarked with his servant to make the tour of the sea, and eight days afterward the old

woman in whose tent I lodged had found him lying on the shore alone, gasping for breath. She had him carried to her hut, where he lay till the Rev. Mr. Nicolaisen, the English missionary at Jerusalem, came for him, and the second day after his arrival in Jerusalem he died. With his dying breath he bore the same testimony to the kindness of woman under the burning sun of Syria, that our countryman Ledyard did in the wilds of Siberia ; for, while lying upon the shores of the Dead Sea, the Arabs gathered round him only to gaze, and would have left him to die there if this old woman had not prevailed upon two of her sons to carry him to her hut.

That boat was interesting to me for another reason. Nothing, not even the thought of visiting Petra and the land of Idumea, affected me so strangely as the idea of making the tour of this sea ; and, notwithstanding the miserable state of my health, shattered by my journey in the desert, as soon as I heard, after my arrival at Jerusalem, that there was a boat at Jericho, I began to think of taking advantage of it. If I had succeeded in this, I should consider my tour the most perfect and complete ever made by any oriental traveller. I had hunted up the oars, sail, &c. ; but on my return from Jaffa I was compelled to abandon all thoughts of making the attempt. Still, when I saw the boat, all my ardour revived ; and never, in my lonely journeyings in the East, did I wish so earnestly for the comfort and support of a friend. With a companion, or even with a ser-

vant, who would encourage and support me, in spite of my health I should certainly have undertaken it; but Paul was particularly averse to the attempt; the boat was barely large enough for two; and I was compelled to give up the thought.

That evening I saw at Jericho what I never saw before. It was a beautiful moonlight night, and all the women were out of doors singing and dancing. The dance was altogether indescribable; consisting not of wanton movements, like those of the dancing girls in Egypt, but merely in joining hands and moving round in a circle, keeping time to the music of their own voices. I had never seen so gay and joyous a scene among the women in the East; and though their fathers, and brothers, and husbands, and lovers were away among the mountains, I did not feel disposed to judge them harshly. It was so rare, in that unhappy country, to see anything like gaiety of heart, that if they had been dancing over the graves of their husbands I should have been inclined to join them. And they did not shun us as the Moslem women generally do; they talked with us with their faces uncovered; and I remember a young Arab girl, not more than sixteen, who had a child in her arms, and who told me that its father had fled to the mountains, and she put the child in my arms while she joined in the dance. In fact, my situation began to be peculiar; the aga had gone off to look for some one who would accompany me to the Dead Sea; and

among perhaps more than a hundred women, that night Paul, and I, and my muleteers were the only men in Jericho. In justice to the poor Arab women, however, I would remove from them any imputation of want of feeling or hardness of heart; for I have no doubt the young girl who left her child in my arms loved its father as warmly as if they were all clad in purple and fine raiment every day.

I would have been better satisfied, however, if that night they had ceased their merriment at an earlier hour; for long after I had lain down on my stony bed, their song and laugh prevented my sleeping; and when they had retired, other noises followed: the lowing of cattle, the bleating of sheep and goats, the stamping of horses, the crying of children, and the loud barking of the watch-dog; and, finally, the fierce assault of the voracious insects that always swarm in an Arab's hut, drove me from my bed and out of doors. The cool air refreshed and revived me, and I walked by the light of a splendid moon among the miserable huts of the village, hunted and barked at by the watching wolf-dog, and perhaps exciting the apprehensions of the unprotected women.


I leaned against a high fence of brush enclosing some of the huts, and mused upon the wonderful events of which this miserable place had been the scene, until my eyes began to close; when, opening a place among the bushes, I drew my cloak around me and crawled in, and soon fell fast asleep. Once during the night I was worried and almost

dragged out of my burrowing-place by the dogs, but I kicked them away and slept on. At daylight the aga was pulling me by the shoulder, armed to the teeth, and ready to escort me. I shook myself and my toilet was made ; and before the laughers, and singers, and dancers of the previous night had waked from their slumbers, we were mounted and on our way to the Jordan.

CHAPTER XV.

The River Jordan.—The Dead Sea.—Force of Example.—Buoyancy of the Dead Sea.—A Perilous Ascent.—A Navigator of the Dead Sea.—Story of the Voyage.—The Convent of Santa Saba.

MOVING directly from the ruined village, we soon left the fertile plains of Jericho and entered the barren valley of the Jordan. It was washed and torn by the mountain torrents, full of gullies and large sand-hills; and in about an hour and a half we were standing on the banks of the river, at the most hallowed spot on the margin of that sacred stream, where, eighteen hundred years ago, John baptized the Redeemer of the world; and where, year after year, thousands of pilgrims throw themselves into the river with the blind belief that, by bathing in its waters, they wash away their sins. As a pious pilgrim, it would have been my duty, perhaps, to do the same; but the reader will please remember that it was the last day of March; that I had slept in a bush; that my limbs were stiff; and that it was not yet six o'clock in the morning, and that I had not breakfasted. Sitting down, then, on the bank, I made my morning meal, and drank as devoutly



of its water as any pilgrim who ever stood by Jordan.

I afterward followed the river close along its bank till it emptied into the Dead Sea, and nowhere found any spot that, for beauty of scenery, could be compared with this consecrated bathing-place of the pilgrims. The bank here is about ten or twelve feet high; a clear, level table of land, covered with rich grass, and large bushes on the edge overhanging the river. Judging by the eye, the river is here about thirty paces broad; the current is very rapid, and the pilgrim, in bathing, is obliged to hold on by the bushes to avoid being carried away. Here, it is said, the wild beast still has his haunt; and the traveller sometimes, when the river is rising, may realize the expression; "He shall come up like a lion out of the swelling of Jordan." Opposite, the bank is low, and the bushes grow down to the water's edge. Immediately below this the river narrows to ten paces; and there is not another spot on the line of the Jordan which can attract the eye of the traveller. It is a small, broken, and muddy stream, running between banks of barren sand, without bloom or verdure; and if it were not for the associations connected with it, a man would turn from it as the most uninteresting of rivers. In one place I saw an Arab wading across; and the river there, so far as I could judge, had not fallen more than two feet. I followed it as closely as the cracks and gullies would allow, cutting off none of the bends. For the last two or three

miles it runs between perpendicular banks of sand, from five to ten feet high, and its pure waters are already corrupted by the pestiferous influence of the bituminous lake. On the left it stops even with the shore ; but on the right the bank runs out to a low, sandy point, round which a quantity of drift-wood is collected ; and here, with a gentle ripple of its waters, the Jordan is lost in the Dead Sea.

I followed it almost to the very point, until my horse's feet sank above his fetlocks in the wet sand. It was the old opinion, and was counted among the wonders of the Lake Asphaltites, that the river passed through without mingling with the waters of the lake ; and Pococke says, " I thought I saw the stream of a different colour ;" but Pococke did not follow the river down to the extreme point. I did ; and could see most distinctly the very spot where the waters mingled ; instead of the river keeping its way through, its current was rather stopped at once by the denser water of the lake ; and, in fact, for two or three miles above its mouth, the Jordan is impregnated with the salt and bituminous matter of the lake.

Almost at the moment of my turning from the Jordan to the Dead Sea, notwithstanding the long-credited accounts that no bird could fly over without dropping dead upon its surface, I saw a flock of gulls floating quietly on its bosom ; and when I roused them with a stone, they flew down the lake, skimming its surface until they had carried themselves out of sight. From the point on which

I stood, near its eastern shore, the sea was spread out before me, motionless as a lake of molten lead, bounded on either side by ranges of high and barren mountains, and on its southern extremity by the great desert Valley of El Ghor; constantly receiving the waters of the Jordan, but, unlike other waters, sending no tribute to the sea. Pliny, Diodorus Siculus, and Josephus describe it as more than sixty miles long; but Mr. Banks and his companions, by observation from elevated heights, make it not more than thirty; and, as the ancients were better acquainted with it than modern geographers, it has been supposed that the lake has contracted in its dimensions, and that part of the Valley of El Ghor was once covered by its waters. Moving on slowly from the point of the Jordan, the shores low and sandy, strewed with brush and drift wood, and rising in a slope to the sandy plain above, I rode along nearly the whole head of the lake, with my horse's feet in the water, and twice picked up a large piece of bitumen, almost like common pitch, supposed to be thrown up from the bottom of the lake. The sand is not bright like that of an Atlantic or Mediterranean beach, but of a dirty, dark brown. The water is exceedingly clear and transparent, but its taste and smell are a compound of all that is bad.

It was now the last day of March, and even before we left the plains of Jordan the sun had been intensely hot: without a branch or leaf to break its force, it poured upon the dreary waste around the Dead Sea with a scorching and withering heat.

It was on this shore that the Knight of the Leopard encountered the Saracen Emir ; and in the sandy plain above is the beautiful scene of the Diamond of the Desert in the opening of Scott's Crusaders. The general features of the scenery along the northern shore of the Dead Sea are admirably described. The Diamond of the Desert is of course the creation of the author's fancy ; and the only actual error is in the placing of the wilderness of Engaddi, which Scott has confounded with the mountains of Quarantania, but which is really half way down the borders of the sea.

It was two o'clock when my guards, having conducted me along the head of the sea, proposed returning to Jericho. I had already had some difficulty with them. Twice disappointed in my purposed exploration of this sea ; once in my wish, conceived on the top of Mount Hor, to strike it at its southern extremity, and coast along its borders ; and then, in the still more attractive project of exploring it in a boat, instead of returning to Jericho, my desire was to go down the borders of the sea, and turn up among the mountains to the convent of Santa Saba. At Jerusalem I could not hire horses for this convent, because, as they said, it was a dangerous route ; and I took them for Jericho, hoping in some way or other still to accomplish my object. By accident, an Arab from Santa Saba had come to Jericho during the night ; and in the morning I told the aga and his companion that I would not have them as my escort at all, unless they would go with me to

the convent. They at first objected, but afterward promised to go as far as I wanted them ; now they again made objections. I thought it was merely to enhance the value of their services ; but in a few moments they told me they would not go any farther ; that the order of the governor was to protect me to the Dead Sea and back to Jericho. The worst of it was, that my muleteers refused to go without the guard ; and, although we had a guide with us who told us there was no danger, though we had not met a single Arab since we left Jericho, and though we could see many miles down the lake, and plainly distinguish the wild track up the bare side of the mountain to the open country above, they were " afraid of the bad Arabs." I was determined, however, not to go back to Jericho. I had no idea of sleeping in the bushes again ; and, spurring my horse, I told Paul to follow me, and they might do as they pleased. The Aga and his companion bade me farewell ; and, dashing over the arid plain, were soon hidden from view by hillocks of sand. I continued along the shore ; and, after a few moments' consultation, my Arabs quietly followed me.

Since early in the morning, I had had the sea constantly before my eyes. While riding along the northern shore, the general aspect was very much the same ; but, as soon as I turned the head, and began to move along its side, the mountains every moment assumed a different aspect, although everywhere wild, rugged, and barren. At three o'clock we were approaching a place where the

mountain rises precipitously from the lake, leaving no room for a passage at its foot ; my eyes were fixed upon the lake, my thoughts upon its mysterious properties. The ancients believed that living bodies, and even heavy metals, would not sink in it ; and Pliny and Strabo have written of its extraordinary buoyancy. Before I left Jerusalem, I had resolved not to bathe in it, on account of my health ; and I had sustained my resolution during the whole of my day's ride along its shore ; but, on the point of turning up among the mountains, I could resist no longer. My clothes seemed to come off of their own accord ; and, before Paul had time to ask me what I was going to do, I was floating on its waters. Paul and the Arabs followed ; and after splashing about for a while, we lay like a parcel of corks upon its surface.

From my own experience, I can almost corroborate the most extravagant accounts of the ancients. I know, in reference to my own specific gravity, that in the Atlantic or Mediterranean I cannot float without some little movement of the hands, and even then my body is almost totally submerged ; but here, when I threw myself upon my back, my body was half out of the water. It was an exertion even for my lank Arabs to keep themselves under. When I struck out in swimming, it was exceedingly awkward ; for my legs were constantly rising to the surface, and even above the water. I could have lain there and read with perfect ease. In fact, I could have slept, and it would have been a much easier bed than the bushes at Jericho. It was ludicrous to see one of the horses.

As soon as his body touched the water he was afloat, and turned over on his side; he struggled with all his force to preserve his equilibrium, but the moment he stopped moving he turned over on his side again, and almost on his back, kicking his feet out of water, and snorting with terror. The worst of my bath was, after it was over, my skin was covered with a thick, glutinous substance, which it required another ablution to get rid of; and after I had wiped myself dry, my body burnt and smarted as if I had been turned round before a roasting fire. My face and ears were incrustated with salt; my hairs stood out, "each particular hair on end;" and my eyes were irritated and inflamed, so that I felt the effects of it for several days. In spite of all this, however, revived and refreshed by my bath I mounted my horse a new man.

Modern science has solved all the mystery about this water. It has been satisfactorily analyzed, and its specific gravity ascertained to be 1·211, a degree of density unknown in any other, the specific gravity of fresh water being 1·000; and it has been found to hold in solution the following proportions of salt to one hundred grains of water:—

	Grains.
Muriate of lime,	3·920
Muriate of magnesia,	10·246
Muriate of soda,	10·360
Sulphate of lime,	0·054
	<hr/>
	24·580

Except the ruined city of Petra, I never felt so

unwilling to leave any place. I was unsatisfied. I had a longing desire to explore every part of that unknown water ; to spend days upon its surface ; to coast along its shores ; to sound its mysterious depths, and search for the ruins of the guilty cities. And why not ? If we believe our Bible, that bituminous lake covers the once fertile Vale of Siddim, and the ruins of Sodom and Gomorrah ; and why may we not see them ? The ruins of Thebes still cover for miles the banks of the Nile ; the pyramids stand towering as when they were built, and no man knows their builders ; and the traveller may still trace, by “ the great river, the Euphrates,” the ruins of the Tower of Babel. Besides, that water does not destroy ; it preserves all that it touches ; the wood that falls into it becomes petrified by its action ; and I can see no good reason why it should hide for ever from man’s eyes the monuments of that fearful anger which the crimes of the guilty had so righteously provoked.

Except to the summit of Mount Hor, I never had so desperate a climb as up the barren mountain on the borders of the Dead Sea. We had not found any water fit to drink since we left the Jordan, and turned up a little before we reached the place we had intended, the guide telling us that here we would find a spring. We were soon obliged to dismount ; and even our sure-footed horses, trained as they were to climbing mountains, slipped, faltered, and completely failed. Our guide told us that he had never ascended with

horses before ; and, looking forward, the attempt seemed utterly impossible ; but the noble animals climbed with the intelligence of men, holding on with their fore-feet as if they were hands, and the Arabs above pulling them by the mane, or pushing from below. One of them, in climbing an almost perpendicular height, fell over backward. I thought he was killed ; and my Arabs, irritated by toil, thirst, and the danger to their horses, sprang upon the guide, and I believe would have killed him, if Paul and I had not interfered. Taking off the enormous saddle, we all joined above and below, and hoisted and pushed him up almost bodily.

It was nearly dark when we reached the top of the mountain, and I sat down for a moment to take a last look at the Dead Sea. From this distance its aspect fully justified its name. It was calm, motionless, and seemingly dead ; there was no wave or ripple on its surface, nor was it hurrying on, like other waters, to pay its tribute to the ocean : the mountains around it were also dead ; no trees or shrubs, not a blade of grass, grew on their naked sides ; and, as in the days of Moses, “ Brimstone and salt, it is not sown, nor beareth, nor any grass groweth thereon.”

One thing had especially attracted my attention in ascending the mountain ; on attaining a particular point, we had a clear view of the whole sea, and at the extreme end we saw distinctly what Paul and I both at once called an island. M. Seetzen, one of the earliest modern travellers who

visited this sea, imagined that he had discovered a large island in the same direction ; and though no one believed in its reality, I had then seen no satisfactory explanation of the appearance. I could not be deceived in what I saw. There never was anything that looked more like an island, and I afterwards received an explanation which, to me at least, was perfectly satisfactory. It comes from one who ought to know, from the only man who ever made the tour of that sea, and lived to tell of it ; and, relying upon the interesting nature of the subject, I make no apology for introducing it here.

When the unhappy Costigan was found by the Arabs on the shore of the Dead Sea, the spirit of the enterprising Irishman was fast fleeing away. He lived two days after he was carried to the convent at Jerusalem, but he never once referred to his unhappy voyage. He had long been a traveller in the East, and long preparing for this voyage ; had read every book that treated of the mysterious water, and was thoroughly prepared with all the knowledge necessary for exploring it to advantage. Unfortunately for the interests of science, he had always been in the habit of trusting greatly to his memory ; and, after his death, the missionaries in Jerusalem found no regular diary or journal, but merely brief notes written on the margins of books, so irregular and confused that they could make nothing of them ; and, either from indifference, or because they had no confidence in him, they allowed Costigan's servant to

go without asking him any questions. I took some pains to trace out this man ; and afterward, while lying at Beyroot, suffering from a malady which abruptly put an end to my travels in the East, Paul hunted him out and brought him to me. He was a little, dried-up Maltese sailor ; had rowed around that sea without knowing why, except that he was paid for it ; and what he told me bore the stamp of truth, for he did not seem to think that he had done anything extraordinary. He knew as little about it as any man could know who had been over the same water ; and yet, after all, perhaps he knew as much as any one else could learn. He seemed, however, to have observed the coast and the soundings with the eye of a sailor, and I got him to make me a map, which has been engraved for this work, and on which I marked down the particulars as I received them from his lips. The reader will see by it that they had completed the whole tour of the lake. They were eight days in accomplishing the task, sleeping every night on shore except once, when, afraid of some suspicious Arabs whom they saw on the mountains, they slept on board, beyond the reach of gunshot from the land. He told me that they had moved in a zigzag direction, crossing and recrossing the lake several times ; that every day they sounded, frequently with a line of one hundred and seventy-five brachia (about six feet each) ; that they found the bottom rocky and of very unequal depth, sometimes ranging thirty, forty, eighty, twenty brachia all within a few

boats' length;* that sometimes the lead brought up sand, like that of the mountains on each side; that they failed in finding bottom but once, and in that place there were large bubbles all around for thirty paces, rising probably from a spring; that in one place they found on the bank a hot sulphur spring; that at the southern extremity Mr. Costigan looked for the River of Dogs, but did not find it; that in four different places they found ruins, and could clearly distinguish large hewn stones, which seemed to have been used for buildings; and in one place they saw ruins which Mr. Costigan said were the ruins of Gomorrah. Now I have no doubt that Mr. Costigan talked with him as they went along, and told him what he told me; and that Mr. Costigan had persuaded himself that he did see the ruins of the guilty city; he may have been deceived, and probably was; but it must have been the most intensely interesting illusion that ever any man had. But of the island, or what Paul and I had imagined to be such, he said that they too had noticed it particularly; and when they came towards the southern extremity of the lake, found that it was an optical deception, caused by a tongue of high land, that put out for a long distance from the middle of the southern

* I would suggest whether this irregularity does not tend to show the fallacy of the opinion, that the cities of the plain were destroyed by a volcanic eruption, and that the lake covers the crater of an extinct volcano. I have seen the craters of Vesuvius, Solfatara, Etna, and Monte Rosso, and all present the same form of a mountain excavated in the form of a cone, without any of the irregularities found in the bottom of this sea.

extremity, as in the map ; and being much higher than the valley beyond it, intercepted the view in the manner we had both noticed ; this tongue of land, he said, was composed of solid salt, tending to confirm the assertion of Strabo, to which I referred in my journey through Idumea, that in the great valley south of the Dead Sea there were formerly large cities built entirely of salt. The reader will take this for what it is worth ; it is at least new, and it comes from the only man living who has explored the lake.

He told me some other particulars ; that the boat, when empty, floated a palm higher out of the water than on the Mediterranean ; and that Costigan lay on the water, and picked a fowl, and tried to induce him to come in ; that it was in the month of July, and from nine to five dreadfully hot, and every night a north wind blew, and the waves were worse than in the Gulf of Lyons ; and, in reference to their peculiar exposures, and the circumstances that hurried poor Costigan to his unhappy fate, he said that they had suffered exceedingly from the heat, the first five days Costigan taking his turn at the oars ; that on the sixth day their water was exhausted, and Costigan gave out ; that on the seventh day they were obliged to drink the water of the sea, and on the eighth they were near the head of the lake, and he himself exhausted, and unable any longer to pull an oar. There he made coffee from the water of the sea ; and a favourable wind springing up, for the first time they

hoisted their sail, and in a few hours reached the head of the lake ; that, feeble as he was, he set off for Jericho, and, in the mean time, the unhappy Costigan was found by the Arabs on the shore a dying man, and by the intercession of the old woman, carried to Jericho. I ought to add, that the next time he came to me, like Goose Gibbie, he had tried whether the money I gave him was good, and recollected a great many things he had forgotten before.

The reader cannot feel the same interest in that sea which I did, and therefore I will not detain him longer. In three hours, crossing a rich and fertile country, where flowers were blooming, and Arab shepherds were pasturing their flocks of sheep and goats, we had descended the bed of a ravine, where the Kedron passes from Jerusalem to the Dead Sea, at the foot of the mountains of Santa Saba. It was night when we arrived ; and, groping our way by the uncertain light of the moon, we arrived at the door of the convent, a lofty and gigantic structure, rising in stories or terraces, one above the other, against the sides of the mountain, to its very top ; and then crowned with turrets that, from the base where I stood, seemed, like the tower at which the wickedness of man was confounded, striving to reach to heaven.

We “ knocked, and it was opened to us ;” ascended two or three flights of steps, climbed up a ladder, crawled through a small door, only large enough to admit one at a time, and found our-

selves in an antechamber, surrounded by more than a hundred Greek pilgrims. A monk conducted us up two or three flights of steps to the chamber of the superior, where we took coffee. In a few moments we followed him again up two or three more flights of steps to a neat little room, with a divan and a large pile of coverlets.

I thought of the bush in which I had lodged the night before, spread out a few of the coverlets, crawled in among them, and in a few moments the Dead Sea, and the Holy Land, and every other land and sea were nothing to me.

CHAPTER XVI.

Convent of Santa Saba. — A strange Picture. — Celebration of Good Friday. — Palm Sunday. — A Struggle for Life. — The Grave of a Friend. — A Convert. — Burial of a Missionary.

I SLEPT till nine o'clock the next morning. The first thing I did after breakfast was to mount to the tower at the top of the convent. This is the largest Greek convent in the Holy Land; and I remarked that it was in a good state of repair, and that large and expensive improvements were then in progress. The tower commanded a view of the whole convent, built in terraces, in a sort of amphitheatre, in the side of the mountain. All around, particularly in the mountain opposite, were ranges of grottoes, formerly the residences of anchorites and hermits, admirably situated for cherishing pious thoughts and leading a holy life. An old, white-bearded monk, leaning on his staff, was toiling up its sides, leading a long procession of pilgrims, probably to some very holy place; and below me, apparently growing out of the rock, was a large palm-tree, planted, as they say, by Santa Saba himself in the fourth century. The cemetery is about half way down, in a vault under an open

area. The flat stone that covered the entrance was fastened down with cement. The monk told me that the bodies of the dead were laid on the stone benches, where lime was thrown over them, and, as soon as decomposition had taken place, the bones were removed and thrown upon a pile in another part of the cemetery.

The chapel, like all the other Greek chapels, was full of gaudy and ridiculous ornaments and paintings; and, among the latter, there was one that attracted the particular admiration and reverence of the pilgrims. At the top of the picture sat the Father, surrounded by angels, and patriarchs, and good men; and on his right was a range of two-story houses, St. Peter standing before them with the keys in his hand. Below the Father was a large, powerful man, with a huge pair of scales in his hand, weighing sinners as they came up, and billeting on each the weight of his sins; below him were a number of naked figures, in a sitting posture, with their arms spread out, and their legs enclosed in long boxes extended horizontally. On the left a stream of fire was coming down from the Father, and collecting in the mouth of a huge nondescript sea-monster, while in front stood a great half-naked figure, pitching in the sinners just as the fireman on board a steamboat pitches in the long sticks of wood, and the damned were kicking about in the flames. On the right was Elias doing battle with Anti-christ; and below was a representation of the last day, and the graves giving up their dead,

in almost every conceivable variety of form and situation.

In another chapel, dedicated to John of Damascus, who formerly lived there, behind an iron grating in a grotto of the rock, was a large pile of skulls and bones, the remains of fourteen thousand hermits who dwelt among the mountains and were slain by the Turks.

The superior had been waiting some time to accompany me to Jerusalem. Will the reader believe it? This man had lived twenty years in the convent, and had never been to the Dead Sea! I was so disgusted with him that I rode on and left him; and, following the Valley of the Kedron, meeting on the way hundreds of Greek pilgrims, in three hours I was again in Jerusalem.

The next night being Good Friday, the monks of the Latin Convent performed the ceremony of the Crucifixion. The doors were open at an early hour for a short time, and then closed for the night, so that we were obliged to be there two or three hours before the ceremony began. Most of the pilgrims had prepared against the tediousness of waiting by bringing with them their beds, mats, and coverlets; and all around the floor of the church, men, women, and children were taking an intermediate nap. The proceedings commenced in the chapel of the Latin Convent, where priests, monks, pilgrims, Paul, and myself, all assembled, every one holding in

his hand a long lighted candle. The superior, with his gold mitre and black velvet cloak trimmed with gold, my friend the Sicilian priest, and some other dignitaries of the church, were present very richly dressed. On a large cross was the figure of a man, representing the Saviour, the crown of thorns on his head, nails in his hands and feet, blood trickling from them, and a gaping wound in his side. Before setting out on the procession the lights were extinguished; and, in total darkness, a monk commenced a sermon in Italian. After this the candles were relighted, banners and crucifixes raised, and the procession moved round the church towards Calvary. Stopping at the pillar of flagellation, at the prison where they say Christ was confined, where the crown of thorns was put upon his head, where his raiment was divided, &c., and giving a chant, and an address by one of the monks at each place, they wound round the church until they came to the staircase leading to Calvary; and, leaving their shoes below, mounted barefoot to the place of crucifixion. Here they first went to an altar on the right, where, as they have it, Christ was nailed to the cross; and laying the figure down on the floor, although they had been bearing it aloft for more than two hours, they now went through the ceremony of nailing it; and, returning to the adjoining altar, passed the foot of the cross through the marble floor, and, with the bleeding figure upon it, set it up in the hole in the natural rock, according to the

tradition, in the very spot where, eighteen hundred years ago, Christ was crucified. At the foot of the cross a monk preached a sermon in Italian, warm, earnest, and impassioned; frequently turning round, and, with both hands extended, apostrophising the bleeding figure above him. In spite of my scepticism and incredulity, and my contempt for monkish tricks, I could not behold this scene unmoved. Every attendant upon the crucifixion was represented; for the Governor of Jerusalem was present, with a smile of scorn upon his handsome features, and Turkish and Mussulman soldiers, breaking the stillness of the scene with loud laughs of derision; and I could almost imagine that I heard the unbelieving Jews, with gibes and sneers, crying out, "If he be the King of Israel, let him come down from the cross."

After the body had remained some time suspended, two friars, personating Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, approached the foot of the cross; and one of them on the right, with a long pair of pincers, took the crown of thorns from the head, waved it round slowly with a theatrically mournful air, kissed it, and laid it down on a table before him; he then drew long spikes from the hands and feet, and moving them around, one by one, slowly as before, kissed them, and laid them also on the table. I never saw anything more affecting than this representation, bad as it was, of the bloody drama of the crucifixion; and as the monks drew out the long

nails from the hands and feet, even the scoffing Mussulmans stopped their laugh of derision. I stood by the table while they laid the body upon it, and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth ; followed them when they carried it down from Calvary to the stone of unction ; stood by the head of the stone while they washed and anointed it, and prepared it for burial, and followed it to the door of the sepulchre. It was now near two o'clock ; the ceremony was ended, the Mussulman soldiers had retired, and Paul and I returned to the convent. We had no lamp ; and as, in all the Turkish cities, every one is obliged to carry a lamp at night, and, in fact, it is necessary for his own security, we walked through the narrow streets of Jerusalem bearing the same long candles with which we had figured in the procession of the crucifixion.

On Sunday morning, being Easter, or Palm Sunday, I visited, for the last time, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. It was more crowded than I had ever yet seen it. The courtyard literally swarmed with venders of amulets, crucifixes, and holy ornaments ; and within the church were tables of oranges, figs, dates, &c. The Arab baker was walking about, with a large tray on his head, crying his bread ; and in each of the altars was a sort of shop, in which Greeks were making and selling chaplets and wreaths of palm-leaves. It was altogether a lively image of the scene when Christ went into the temple, and " cast out them that bought and sold, and overthrew the tables of

the money-changers." The ceremonies of the day were in commemoration of that on which our Saviour entered into Jerusalem, riding upon an ass, when the multitude followed him, strewing their garments and branches of palm-trees in his path, and crying, "Hosannah to the Son of David!" When I entered, the monks of the Latin Convent were celebrating grand mass before the holy sepulchre; and, in the mean time, the Greeks were getting ready for their turn. Their chapel was crowded, and all along the corridors the monks were arranging the people in procession, and distributing banners, for which the young Greeks were scrambling; and in one place a monk, with a standard in his hand, which had just been handed down from above, with his back against the wall, was knocking and kicking away a crowd of young Greeks, struggling to obtain it for the procession.

As soon as the Latins had finished, the Arab soldiers, whom I always found regular attendants at these scenes, as if they knew what was coming when the Greeks began, addressed them with loud shouts of "Yellah, yellah—come on, come on!" A large banner was stationed at the door of the sepulchre; and the rush of the pilgrims to prostrate themselves before it, and to touch it with their palm-branches, was tremendous. A tall young Greek, with a large turban on his head, while his left hand supported the banner, was laying about him with his right as if he were really defending the sepulchre itself from the

hands of the infidels. The procession advanced under a loud chant, preceded by a body of Turkish officers to clear the way ; then came the priests, wearing their richest dresses, their mitres and caps richly ornamented with precious stones, and carrying aloft sacred banners, and one of them sprinkling holy water. Wherever he came the rush was terrible ; the Greeks became excited to a sort of phrensy in their eagerness to catch a drop ; and one strapping fellow, bursting through the rear ranks, thrust his face over my shoulder, and bawled out, " Papa, papa," in such an agonizing voice, that the " papa " aimed at him a copious discharge, of which my face received the principal benefit. When the largest banner came round, the struggle to touch it with the palm-branches was inconceivable. A Turkish officer had, until this time, covered me with his body, and, by dint of shouting, kicking, and striking furiously about him, saved me till the procession passed by ; but after this the rush became dreadful. I could feel my ribs yielding under the pressure, and was really alarmed when a sudden and mighty surge of the struggling mass hurried me into the stock in trade of a merchant of dates and oranges. Instead of picking up his goods, the fellow grappled at me ; but I got out of his clutches as well as I could ; and, setting up for myself, kicked, thumped, and scuffled until I made my way to the door ; and that was my last visit to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

I had regretted that I could not stay for the

great Greek jugglery, the drawing down fire from heaven, when every pilgrim considers himself bound to light his taper at the sacred flame; and those who light first are considered the most fortunate and the most favoured in the sight of God. I could imagine the wild and frantic struggling among more than ten thousand bigots and fanatics for the first rays of the heavenly light; but, from what I saw that day, I felt that it would be putting life and limb in peril to be among them. Two years before a horrible catastrophe had happened at the enactment of this ceremony. The air of the church had become so contaminated by the exhalations from the bodies of the thousands crowded within it, that respiration became difficult; terror, confusion, and a rush for the door ensued; Ibrahim Pacha was carried out senseless, over the heads of the people, by a strong body of his soldiers, and between two and three hundred pilgrims were trodden down and trampled to death. Their bodies were laid out next morning in the court of the church; and so degraded is the character of these Christian pilgrims, that, as I was told by Mr. Nicolaisen, the English missionary to the Jews, who was looking among them for a servant of his own, the friends and relatives of the slain carried them away in triumph, as martyrs in the cause of Christ.

My last visit in Jerusalem was to Mount Zion. I believe I have not mentioned that on this hill stands the tomb, or the supposed tomb, of David. It is covered by a mosque; the tomb is walled

in, and, as the Arab doorkeeper told me, even the eyes of the Pacha are not permitted to look within the holy place. Here, too, is the cœnaculum; or chamber where our Saviour ate his last supper with his disciples; in the Armenian chapel is the real stone that was rolled from the door of the sepulchre; and here also is the house of Cai-phas the high-priest, with a tree marking the spot where the cock crew when Peter denied his master.

But there was one spot on Mount Zion far more interesting to me than all these, or even than anything in Jerusalem. It was the grave of my early friend, whom I had tracked in his wanderings from the Cataracts of the Nile, through the wilderness of Sinai, to his last resting-place in Jerusalem. Years had rolled away since I bade him farewell in the streets of our native city. I had heard of him in the gay circles of Paris as about to wed with one of the proudest names in France; again, as a wanderer in the East, and then as dead in Palestine. But a few short years had passed away, and what changes! My old schoolmates, the companions of my youth and opening manhood, where were they? Gone, scattered, dispersed, and dead; one of them was sleeping in the cold earth under my feet. He had left his home, and become a wanderer in strange lands, and had come to the Holy Land to die, and I was now bending over his grave. Where were the friends that should have gathered around him in the awful hour of death? Who closed his dying

eyes? Who received his parting words for his friends at home? Who buried him on Mount Zion? Once I had been present there at a scene which almost made me weep, the burial of an Armenian pilgrim. He was brought for burial in the clothes in which he had died; the grave was too small, and had to be enlarged; the priest stood at the head of the grave under a heavy shower of rain, and, as he offered me his snuff-box, grumbled at being obliged to wait; and when the grave was enlarged, and the body thrown in, and the wet dirt cast upon it, he mumbled a short prayer, and then all hurried away. And this was by the grave of my friend; and I could not but ask myself who had buried him, and who had mourned over his grave. The inscription on his tombstone afforded but vague answers to my questions, and they were of a painful character. It ran thus:

D. O. M.
 Hic jacet,
 C***** B*****, ex Americæ
 Regionibus
 Lugduni Galliæ Consul Hyerosolomis tactus intrinsecus sponte
 Erroribus Lutheri et Calvinii abjectis,
 Catholicam religionem professus synanche correptus
 E vita decessit IV. nonas Augusti, MDCCCXXX, ætatis suæ
 XXV.
 Amici mœrentes posuere
 Orate pro eo.

He had died at the convent, and died alone. His travelling companion had accidentally remained at

Jaffa, had not heard of his sickness, and did not arrive in Jerusalem until poor B—— was in his grave. It was necessary to be wary in my inquiries; for the Catholics here are ever on the watch for souls, and with great ostentation had blazoned his conversion upon his tomb. The first time I inquired about him, a young monk told me that he remembered him well, as on the day of his arrival, a fine, handsome young man, full of health and spirit, and that he immediately commenced talking about religion, and three days afterward they said mass, and took the sacrament together in the chapel of the convent. He told me the story so glibly, that I was confident of its falsity, even without referring to its improbability. I had known B—— well. I knew that, like most young men with us, though entertaining the deepest respect and reverence for holy things, in the pride of youth and health he had lived as if there was no grave; and I could imagine that, stretched upon his bed of death in the dreary cell of the convent, with “no eye to pity and no arm to save,” surrounded by Catholic monks, and probably enfeebled in mind by disease, he had, perhaps, laid hold of the only hope of salvation offered him; and when I stood over his grave, and thought of the many thorns in his pillow in that awful hour—the distracting thoughts of home, of the mother whose name had been the last on his lips; the shuddering consciousness that, if he died a Protestant, his bones would be denied the rites of burial, I pitied, I grieved

for, but I could not blame him. But when suspicion was aroused by the manner of the monk, I resolved to inquire further; and, if his tale should prove untrue, to tear with my own hands the libellous stone from my friend's grave, and hurl it down Mount Zion. I afterward saw the monk who had shrived him, and was told that the young man with whom I had conversed was a prater and a fool; that he himself had never heard B—— speak of religion until after his return from the Dead Sea with the hand of death upon him; that he had administered the sacrament to him but three days before his death, when all hope of life was past, and that even yet it might be a question whether he did really renounce his faith, for the solemn abjuration was made in a language he but imperfectly understood; and he never spoke afterward, except, in the wildness of delirium, to murmur the name of "Mother."

I have said that, in his dying moments, his feelings were harrowed by the thought that his body would be denied a Christian burial. Mr. Whiting, who accompanied me on my first visit to his grave, told me that the Catholics would not have allowed him a resting-place in consecrated ground; and, leading me a short distance to the grave of a friend and fellow-missionary who had died since he had been at Jerusalem, described to me what he had seen of the unchristian spirit of the Christians of the holy city. Refused by the Latins, the friends of Dr. Dodge had asked permission of the Greeks to lay his body

for a little while in their burying-ground ; and, negotiating with the dragoman of the convent, they thought that permission had been granted ; but, while they were in the act of performing the funeral service, a messenger came in to tell them that the grave had been filled up. They protracted the service till the delay excited the attention of his unhappy widow, and they were obliged to tell her that they had no place where they could lay the head of her young husband. A reluctant permission was at length granted, and they buried him by the light of torches ; and although there had been no graves in that part of the ground before, the Greeks had buried all around, to prevent any application for permission to lay by his side the body of another heretic.

CHAPTER XVII.

Pilgrimage to the Jordan.—Pilgrim's Certificate.—The Tomb of Samuel.—Departure from Jerusalem.—Last View of the Dead Sea.—Village of Einbroot.—Departure from Judea.—Mounts Gerizim and Ebal.—An Antique Manuscript.—Paas in Samaria.

THE next day I left Jerusalem; but, before leaving it, I was witness to another striking scene, which I shall never forget; the departure of the pilgrims, fifteen or twenty thousand in number, for the Jordan. At an early hour I was on horseback, outside St. Stephen's Gate. It was such a morning as that on which I started for the Dead Sea, clear, bright, and beautiful; the streets of the city were deserted, and the whole population were outside the walls, sitting under the shadow of the temple, among the tombs of the Turkish burying-ground; the women in their long white dresses, with their faces covered, and the men in large flowing robes of gay and varied colours, and turbans of every fashion, many of them green, the proud token of the pilgrimage to Mecca, with pipes, and swords, and glittering arms; the whole Valley of Jehoshaphat was filled with moving beings, in every variety of gay apparel, as if the great day of resurrection had already come, and the tenants of the dreary

tombs had burst the fetters of the grave, and come forth into new life and beauty.

I had received an invitation from the governor to ride in his suite; and, while waiting for him at the gate, the terrible Abougos, with his retainers, came out and beckoned me to join him. I followed him over the Brook Kedron and the Valley of Jehoshaphat to the Garden of Gethsemane, where I stopped, and, giving my horse to an Arab boy, I stepped over the low fence, and, seating myself on the jutting root of the tree marked by the knives of pilgrims as that under which our Saviour was betrayed, looking over the heads of the Turkish women seated on the fence below, I saw the whole procession streaming from the gate, crossing the Valley of Jehoshaphat, and filing along the foot of the garden. They were on foot and on horseback, on donkeys, mules, dromedaries, and camels, and here and there were well-equipped caravans, with tents and provisions for the monks of the different convents. It would be impossible to give any idea of this strange and extraordinary procession; here might be seen a woman on horseback, with a child on each arm; there a large pannier on each side of a mule, with a man in one and a woman in the other; or a large frame on the high back of a camel, like a diminutive ark, carrying a whole family, with all their quilts, coverlets, cooking utensils, &c. Among them, riding alone on a raw-boned horse, was a beggarly Italian, in a worn and shabby

European dress, with a fowling-piece and a game-bag, and everybody made way for him; and there was a general laugh wherever he came. And now a body of Turkish horsemen, with drawn cimeters in their hands, rushed out of the gate, dashed down the valley and up the sides of the mountains at full gallop, clearing the way for the governor; and then came the governor himself, under a salute from the fortress, on a horse of the best blood of Arabia, riding as if he were part of the noble animal, preceded by the music of the Turkish drum, and bowing with a nobility and dignity of manner known only in the East, and which I marked the more particularly, as he stopped opposite to me and beckoned to me to join him. Then came the pilgrims again, and I sat there till the last had gone by. Galloping back to the gate, I turned to look at them for the last time, a living, moving mass of thousands, thousands of miles from their homes, bound for the sacred Jordan, and strong in the faith that, bathing in its hallowed waters, they should wash away their sins.

In a few moments I was at the convent; and, sending Paul before me to the Damascus Gate, I went to take my leave of the superior. He told me that, though I was an American, (the only Americans he had seen were missionaries, and he did not like them,) he liked me; and, bidding me a kind and affectionate farewell, he put into my hands a pilgrim's certificate, which follows in these words:—

FR. FRANCISCUS XAVERIUS A MELITA.

ORDINIS MINOREUM REGULARIS OBSERVANTIÆ S. P. N. FRANCISCI; CUSTODIÆ MELITENSIS LECTOR THEOLOGUS; EXDEFINITO; SACRÆ CONGREGATIONIS PROPAGANDÆ FIDEI RESPONSALIS; MISSIONUM EGYPTI ET CYPRI PREFECTUS; IN PARTIBUS ORIENTIS COMMISSARIUS APOSTOLICUS; SACRI MONTIS SION, ET SANCTISSIMI SEPULCRI D. N. JESU CHRISTI GUARDIANUS; TOTIUS TERRÆ SANCTÆ CUSTOS, VISITATOR, ET HUMILIS IN DOMINO SERVUS:

Illustrissimo Domino **** * *****, Americano libenter hoc presens testimonium damus, et omnibus, ac singulis hos præsentes nostras litteras lecturis, vel inspecturis notum, fidemque facimus, Laudatum Illustrissimum Dominum Jerusalem pervenisse, et omnia principaliora loca, quæ in tota Palestina visitari solent, presertim Ssm. Sepulchrum Dom. N. Jesu Christi, Calvariæ Montem, Præsepium Betlehemiticum., etc., visitasse. Et quod ita sit, attestationem manu nostra subscribimus, et sigillo majori officii nostri munitam expediri mandamus.

Datis Jerusalem, ex hoc Venerabili
Conventu Sancti Salvatoris die. 3
Aprilis, Anno Domini 18 trigesimo-
sexto.

Fr. Franciscus Xaverius a Melita,
Cus^{us} Terræ Sanctæ.

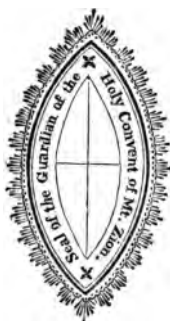


**De Mandato Rendmi in Xpto Patris,
FR. PERPETUUS A SOLERIO,
Secretarius Terræ Sanctæ.**

Which, being interpreted, is as follows :—

Brother Francis Xavier, of Malta, of the order of monks of the regular rule of our father Saint Francis ; theological reader of the order of Malta ; expounder, missionary of the Sacred Congregation for propagating the faith ; Prefect of the Missions of Egypt and Cyprus ; apostolical commissary in the Eastern world ; guardian of the holy Mount Zion and of the most Holy Sepulchre of our Lord Jesus Christ ; keeper and visiter of all the Holy Land, and humble servant in the Lord :

To the most illustrious Lord **** *, an American, we give this present testimonial ; and to all and every one who shall read or inspect these our present letters, we do make known and certify that this celebrated and most illustrious lord has come through Jerusalem, and has visited all the principal places which are accustomed to be visited in all Palestine, especially the most Holy Sepulchre of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Mount of Calvary, the Convent at Bethlehem, &c. ; and that it is so we subscribe this attestation with our hand, and cause it to be put forth fortified by the great seal of our office.



Given at Jerusalem, from this venerable convent of the Holy Saviour, on the third day of April, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and thirty-six.

Brother Francis Xavier, of Malta,
Guardian of the Holy Land.

Given by command, in the private office of the Father,
FRANCIS A SOLERIO,
Perpetual Secretary of the Holy Land.

Whereby the reader will see, that whatever may be his fate hereafter, a pilgrimage to the holy city gives a man temporal honours, and has transformed a republican citizen of America into an "*illustriissimus dominus*."

With this evidence of my pilgrim character, I mounted my horse for the last time at the door of the convent. I lost my way in going to the Damascus Gate, but a friendly Jew conducted me to it; a Jew was the first to welcome me to the Holy Land, and a Jew was the last to speed me on my way from the holy city of Jerusalem. Paul was waiting for me; and for half a mile we passed mounds of ruins, the walls of the old city having extended some distance beyond the Damascus Gate. In about three quarters of an hour, a little to the right, we came to what are called the Tombs of the Judges, excavations in the rock, one of them full of water. I have no satisfaction in the recollection of these tombs, for there I lost my old companion, the terror of evil dogs, my Nubian club; which, since I bought it in Nubia, had seldom been out of my hand. In about three hours we were mounting Djebel Samyel, the highest mountain about Jerusalem, crowned with the ruins of Ramah, the birthplace and tomb of Samuel the seer. A few Arab huts are around the ruins; and a ruined mosque, the minaret of which has fallen, is the most prominent building on the mountain. We entered the mosque; at the farther end was a door locked, but with the key in it. I turned the key and entered a dark

chamber. By the light from the door I could see at the far end a dark, sombre-looking object, and groped my way to the tomb of Samuel; I kept my hands on it, and walked around it; and, hearing some of the villagers at the door, I tore off a piece of the pall, as I had done from the tomb of Aaron, and hurried out. I stopped for a moment on the top of the mountain, and, looking back towards the holy city, saw for the last time the Mosque of Omar, rising proudly over the ruins of the Temple of Solomon, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the walls of Jerusalem, and the Dead Sea. My first view of this latter had been from the tomb of Aaron; and I considered it a not uninteresting coincidence that I was now looking upon it for the last time from the tomb of Samuel.

In about an hour, riding over a rough road, we came to the village of Beer, supposed to be the Beer to which Jotham fled "for fear of his brother Abimelech." A ruined khan was at the entrance of the village, and near it a large fountain, at which the women were washing. About an hour beyond this, to the right, on a little elevation, are the ruins of Beteel, the ancient Bethel. It was here that the bears came out and tore in pieces the children that mocked the bald-headed prophet Elisha, and it was here that Jacob took "the stones of the place for his pillow, and dreamed, and beheld a ladder reaching to heaven, and the angels of God ascending and descending thereon." Though surrounded by stony mountains, it was prettily situated; I rode among the

ruins without dismounting. The place was solitary and deserted, and not a human being appeared to dwell in it. At one end were the ruins of a church, and near it was a large fountain in a stone reservoir; a single cow was drinking at the fountain, and at the moment a boy was driving past a flock of goats to his village home in the mountains. He was a Christian, and called me Christian, and hadji or pilgrim, and gave me a wild flower which he plucked from under my horse's feet. It was a beautiful afternoon, and all was so still and quiet that I felt strongly tempted to lie down and sleep where Jacob did; but I had given away my tent and camp equipage, and I reflected that while I was sure of the patriarch's pillow of stone, I had but little prospect of being blessed with the promise that softened it, "that the land on which he lay should be given to him and his seed, and that in him all the families of the earth should be blessed."

In about an hour we came to the village of Einbroot, prettily situated on an eminence, and commanding on all sides a view of fertile and well-cultivated valleys. We were looking for Einbroot, and as the village to which we had come lay a little off the road, we were not sure it was the place we wanted. A woman told us it was not, a man assured us that the sheik was not at home, and there seemed clearly a disposition to send us on farther; and this determined us to stop. We rode up to the village and inquired for the sheik; the villagers gave us evasive an-

swers, one saying that he was away, and another that he was sick ; but a little boy, pointing with his finger, told us that he was there, praying ; and, looking up, we saw him on the top of the house, on his knees, praying with all his might, and occasionally looking over his shoulder at us. By his not coming to welcome me, I saw that he did not wish me to stay ; and, after my scenes with the Bedouins in the desert, having a comparative contempt for dwellers in houses, I dismounted and sat down, determined to see who would get tired first. In the mean time the villagers gathered around, as spectators of our contest, and the sheik, as if ashamed of himself, at length finished his prayers and came down to receive me. He told me that he had no place for us, and showed me to a large room, fifty or sixty feet square, which seemed to be the common resort and sleeping-place of all who had no particular home. After the comforts of the convent at Jerusalem, I did not like the looks of things in the beginning of my journey ; but, consoling myself with the reflection that it was only for one night, I spread my mat in a corner, and had just time to stroll around the village before dark.

The houses were built of rough stone, a single story in height, with mud roofs, many of them overgrown with grass, and now presenting, towards sundown, the singularly picturesque spectacle, which I had often noticed in Syria, of the inhabitants sitting out upon the terraces and roofs of their houses, or, perhaps, the still more strik-

ing picture of a single old, white-bearded, patriarchal figure sitting alone upon his housetop. One of these venerable personages called me up to his side; and I was well rewarded for my trouble, and could fully appreciate the satisfaction with which the old man, day after day, looked out upon the beautiful and well-cultivated valley, the terraces, and the smiling villages on the mountain side.

Several of the villagers were following us, and among them a fine old man, the brother of the sheik, and formerly sheik himself. He told me that since the stormy times of Mohammed Aly, he had resigned the sheikdom, and comforted himself for the loss of station in the arms of a young wife; and before we parted we were on such good terms that he told me the reason of their unwillingness to receive us; namely, that they thought we were officers of Mohammed Aly, sent to spy out their condition, and ascertain the number of their men able to bear arms; but, satisfied that we were merely travellers, and warmed by my honest disclaimer of the imputed character, he invited me to his house, and both he, and the sheik, and all the villagers seemed striving now to atone for the churlishness of their first reception.

The old man was as kind as a man could be; in fact, his kindness oppressed me; for, having but one room in his house, he sent both his wives out of doors to sleep at a neighbour's. In vain I told him not to disarrange himself on my account;

to make no stranger of me ; to let them stay ; and that it was nothing to me if the whole harem of the Sultan was there : he was positive and decided. I catechised him about his wives, and he said that he had been a poor man all his life, and could never afford to keep more than one till lately ; and now the companion of his youth and the sharer of his poverty was thrust away into a corner, while with all simplicity and honesty he showed me the best place in the house, appropriated to his young bride. He talked as if it had been the hardest thing in the world that he had been obliged to content himself so long with his first wife. Thus, it seems, that here, as with us, extravagance comes with wealth ; and whereas with us, when a man grows rich, he adds another pair of horses to his establishment, so the honest Mussulman indulges himself with another helpmate.

Two Turks and an Arab slept in the room with us ; and before going to bed, that is, before lying down on the mud floor, and the first thing in the morning, they turned their faces to the tomb of the Prophet, kneeled down and prayed. In the evening one of them had complained of a headache, and another, standing over him and pressing his temples with the palms of his hands, repeated a verse of the Koran, and the headache went away. I asked him whether that was good for a sore throat ; he told me that it was, but, after giving me a verse or two, said that his

remedy could only have full effect upon true believers.

Early in the morning I set off, my host and the sheik and half the village gathering around me to bid me farewell and invoke blessings upon me. I did not know the extent of the sacrifice my host had made for me until at the moment of parting, when I got a glimpse of his young wife.

We were now entering the region of Samaria, and, though the mountains were yet stony, a beautiful country was opening before us. We soon came into a smiling valley full of large olive-trees, and rode for some time in a pleasant shade. Everywhere we were meeting streams of pure water, tempting us perpetually to dismount after the sandy desert through which we had been so long travelling. We passed, too, several villages, among which I remember was the village of Cowara, beautifully situated on the side of the mountain, overlooking a fertile valley, and all the women of the village were in the field picking the tares from the grain.

I was now about entering one of the most interesting countries in the Holy Land, consecrated by the presence of our Saviour in the body, and by the exercise of his divine and miraculous powers. The Bible was again in my hand, and I read there that Jesus Christ had left "Judea and departed into Galilee; that he must needs pass through Samaria, and that he came to a city of

Samaria called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph." And "Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, being weary with his journey, sat down on the well, and it was about the sixth hour. And there cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water ; and Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink." It is with no irreverent feeling that I draw the parallel, but I was following in the very footsteps of the Saviour ; I too had left "Judea, and had departed into Galilee;" I too "must needs go through Samaria;" and I too was now coming to the city of Samaria called Sychar, and, before entering the city, I would fain sit down on the well of Jacob, where our Saviour talked with the Samaritan woman.

At Cowara I took a guide to conduct me to this well. In about two hours we were winding along the side of Mount Gerizim, whose summit was covered with the white dome of the tomb of an Arab saint ; and passing one well on the declivity of the mountain, going down to the valley at its base, we came to Jacob's well, or the Beer Samarea of the Arabs. I knew that there was a difference of opinion as to the precise site of this interesting monument ; but, when I found myself at the mouth of this well, I had no wish to look farther ; I could feel and realize the whole scene ; I could see our Saviour coming out from Judea, and travelling along this valley ; I could see him, wearied with his journey, sitting down on this well to rest, and the Samaritan woman, as I saw them at every town in the Holy Land,

coming out for water. I could imagine his looking up to Mount Gerizim, and predicting the ruin of the temple, and telling her that the hour was coming when neither on that mountain nor yet in Jerusalem would she worship the God of her fathers. A large column lay across the top of the well, and the mouth was filled up with huge stones. I could see the water through the crevices; but, even with the assistance of Paul and the Arabs, found it impossible to remove them. I plucked a wild flower growing in the mouth of the well, and passed on.

The ground which I was now treading is supposed to be the "parcel of ground" which Jacob bought of the sons of Hamor, the father of Shechem, for a hundred pieces of silver, and gave to his son Joseph. Turning the point of the mountain, we came to a rich valley, lying between the mountains of Gerizim and Ebal. Crossing this valley, on the sides of the mountains of Ebal is a long range of grottoes and tombs, and a little before coming to them, in a large white building like a sheik's tomb, is the sepulchre of Joseph, as it is written, "the bones also of Joseph, which the children of Israel brought up with them out of Egypt, buried they in Shechem." I dismounted and entered the building, and it is a not uninteresting fact that I found there a white-bearded Israelite, kneeling at the tomb of the patriarch, and teaching a rosy-cheeked boy (his descendant of the fourth generation) the beautiful story of Joseph and his brethren.

It was late in the afternoon when I was moving up the valley of Naplous. The mountains of Gerizim and Ebal, the mountains of blessings and curses, were towering like lofty walls on either side of me ; Mount Gerizim fertile, and Mount Ebal barren, as when God commanded Joshua to set up the stones in Mount Ebal, and pronounced on Mount Gerizim blessings upon the children of Israel "if they would hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord, to observe and do all his commandments,"* and on Ebal the withering curses of disobedience. A beautiful stream, in two or three places filling large reservoirs, was running through the valley, and a shepherd sat on its bank, playing a reed pipe, with his flock feeding quietly around him. The shades of evening were gathering fast as I approached the town of Naplous, the Shechem or Sychem of the Old Testament, and the Sychar of the New. More than a dozen lepers were sitting outside the gate, their faces shining, pimpled, and bloated, covered with sores and pustules, their nostrils open and filled with ulcers, and their red eyes fixed and staring ; with swollen feet they dragged their disgusting bodies towards me, and with hoarse voices extended their deformed and hideous hands for charity.

We rode up the principal street, and at the door of the palace I met the governor just mounting his horse, with a large retinue of officers and

* Deuteronomy xxviii. 1.

slaves around him. We exchanged our greetings on horseback. I showed him my firman, and he sent a janizary to conduct me to the house of a Samaritan, a writer to the government, where I was received, fed, and lodged better than in any other place in the Holy Land, always excepting the abodes of those suffering martyrs, the Terra Santa monks.

I had just time to visit the Samaritan synagogue. Leaving my shoes at the door, with naked feet I entered a small room, about fifteen feet square, with nothing striking or interesting about it except what the Samaritans say is the oldest manuscript in the world, a copy of the Pentateuch, written by Abishua, the grandson of Aaron, three years after the death of Moses, or about three thousand three hundred years ago. The priest was a man of forty-five, and gave me but a poor idea of the character of the Samaritans, for he refused to show me the sacred scroll unless I would pay him first. He then brought down an old manuscript, which, very much to his astonishment, I told him was not the genuine record; giving him very plainly to understand that I was not to be bamboozled in the matter. I had been advised of this trick by the English clergyman whom I met in Jerusalem; and the priest, laughing at my detection of the cheat, while some of his hopeful flock who had followed me joined in the laugh, brought down the other preserved in a tin case. It was written in some character I did not understand, said to be the Samaritan, tattered and

worn, and bearing the marks of extreme age; and, though I knew nothing about it, I admitted it to be the genuine manuscript; and they all laughed when I told the priest what a rogue he was for trying to deceive me; and this priest they believe to be of the tribe of Levi, of the seed of Aaron. If I had left Naplous then I should probably have repeated the words that our Saviour applied to them in his day, "no good thing can come out of Samaria;" but I spent a long evening, and had an interesting conversation with my host and his brother, and in their kindness, sincerity, and honesty forgot the petty duplicity of the Levite.

Much curiosity has existed in Europe among the learned with regard to this singular people, and several of the most eminent men of their day, in London and Paris, have had correspondence with them, but without any satisfactory result. The descendants of the Israelites who remained and were not carried into captivity, on the rebuilding of the second temple were denied the privilege of sharing the labour and expense of its reconstruction at Jerusalem, and, in mortification and revenge, they built a temple on Mount Gerizim, and ever since a deadly hatred has existed between their descendants the Samaritans and the Jews. Gibbon, speaking of them in the time of Justinian, says, "The Samaritans of Palestine were a motley race, an ambiguous sect, rejected as Jews by the pagans, by the Jews as schismatics, and by the Christians as idolaters.

The abomination of the cross had already been planted on their holy mount of Gerizim, but the persecution of Justinian offered only the alternative of baptism or rebellion. They chose the latter; under the standard of a desperate leader, they rose in arms and retaliated their wrongs on the lives, the property, and the temples of a defenceless people. The Samaritans were finally subdued by the regular forces of the East; twenty thousand were slain, twenty thousand were sold by the Arabs to the infidels of Persia and India, and the remains of that unhappy nation atoned for the crime of treason by the sin of hypocrisy." About sixty families are all now remaining, and these few relics of a once powerful people still dwell in their ancient capital, at the base of Mount Gerizim, under the shadow of their fallen temple.

The brother of my host was particularly fond of talking about them. He was very old, and the most deformed man I ever saw who lived to attain a great age. His legs were long, and all his limbs were those of a tall man, but he was so hump-backed that in sitting he rested upon his hump. He asked me many questions about the Samaritans in England, (of America he had no knowledge,) and seemed determined to believe that there were many in that country, and told me that I might say to them, wherever I found them, that there they believed in one omnipotent and eternal God, the five Books of Moses, and a future Messiah, and the day of the Messiah's

coming to be near at hand ; that they practised circumcision, went three times a year up to Mount Gerizim, " the everlasting mountain," to worship and offer sacrifice, and once a year pitched their tents and left their virgins alone on the mount for seven days, expecting that one of them would conceive and bring forth a son, who should be the Messiah ; that they allowed two wives, and, in case of barrenness, four ; that the women were not permitted to enter the synagogue, except once a year during fast, but on no account were they permitted to touch the sacred scroll ; and that, although the Jews and Samaritans had dealings in the market-places, &c., they hated each other now as much as their fathers did before them.

I asked him about Jacob's well ; he said he knew the place, and that he knew our Saviour, or Jesus Christ, as he familiarly called him, very well ; he was Joseph the carpenter's son, of Nazareth ; but that the story which the Christians had about the woman at the well was all a fiction ; that Christ did not convert her ; but that, on the contrary, she laughed at him, and even refused to give him water to drink.

The information I received from these old men is more than I have ever seen in print about this reduced and singular people, and I give it for what it may be worth. I cannot help mentioning a little circumstance, which serves to illustrate the proverb that boys will be boys all the world over. While I was exploring the mysteries of the Sama-

ritan creed, it being the season of Easter, a fine chubby little fellow came to me with a couple of eggs died yellow, and trying them on his teeth, just as we used to do in my boyish days (did we learn it from them, or they from us ?)—gave me a choice ; and though it may seem a trifling incident to the reader, it was not an uninteresting circumstance to me, this celebration of my "paas" in the ancient Sychem, cracking eggs with a Samaritan boy.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Sebaste.—Ruins of the Palace of Herod.—Mount Tabor.—
—Nazareth.—Scriptural Localities.—Tiberias.—An English
Sportsman.—Bethsaida and Chorazin. — Capernaum. —
Zaffad.—Arrival at Acre.

AT about eight o'clock in the morning we left Naplous ; the lepers were lying at the gate as before ; not permitted to enter the walls of the city, but living apart and perpetuating among themselves their loathsome race. The valley of Naplous was, if possible, more beautiful by morning than by evening light, shaded by groves of figs, olives, almonds, and apricots in full bloom, and bounded by lofty mountains, with a clear and beautiful stream winding and murmuring through its centre. Until I came to this place I had frequently said to myself that I would not give the estate of a wealthy gentleman in Geneseo for the whole kingdom of David ; but there was a rare and extraordinary beauty here, even in the hands of the Arab Fellahs. Men and women were stealing among the trees, in gaily-coloured apparel, and, instead of the turban or tarbouch, the men wore a long red cap, with the tassel hanging jauntily like that of a Neapolitan. For more than an hour we followed the course of the stream, and nothing could be more beautifully picturesque than the little mills on its banks ; low, completely

embosomed among the trees, and with their roofs covered with grass, and sometimes the agreeable sound of a waterfall was the first intimation we had of their presence. There was something exceedingly rural and poetic in their appearance. I went down to one of them, more than usually beautiful, hoping to be greeted by some lovely "maid of the mill;" but, as if it were determined that everything like illusion in the East should be destroyed for my especial benefit, the sight of one chamber, filled with sacks of grain, sheep and goats, and all kinds of filth, and a young girl sitting in the door, with the head of an old woman in her lap, occupied as is constantly seen in every miserable town in Italy, drove me away perfectly disgusted.

Leaving the valley, we turned up to the right, and, crossing among the mountains, in two hours came in sight of the ruins of Sebaste, the ancient Samaria, standing upon a singularly bold and insulated mountain, crowned with ruins. The capital of the ten tribes of Israël, where Ahab built his palace of ivory; where, in the days of Jeroboam, her citizens sat in the lap of luxury; saying to their masters "come and let us drink," destroyed by the Assyrians, but rebuilt and restored to more than its original splendour by Herod, now lies in the state foretold by the prophet Amos; "her inhabitants and their posterity are taken away." The ancient Samaritans are all gone, and around the ruins of their palaces and temples are gathered the miserable huts of

the Arab Fellahs. Climbing up the precipitous ascent of the hill, we came to the ruins of a church, or tower, or something else, built by our old friend the Lady Helena, and seen to great advantage from the valley below. The Lady Helena, however, did not put together all this stone and mortar for the picturesque alone ; it was erected over, and in honour of, the prison where John the Baptist was beheaded, and his grave. I knew that this spot was guarded with jealous care by the Arabs, and that none but Mussulmans were permitted to see it ; but this did not prevent my asking admission ; and when the lame sheik said that none could enter without a special order from the Pacha, Paul rated him soundly for thinking we would be such fools as to come without one ; and handing him our travelling firman, the sheik kissed the seal, and utterly unable to determine for himself whether the order was to furnish me with horses or admit me to mosques, said he knew he was bound to obey that seal, and do whatever the bearer told him, and hobbled off to get the key.

Leaving our shoes at the door, in one corner of the enclosure, we entered a small mosque with whitewashed walls, hung with ostrich eggs, clean mats for the praying Mussulmans, a sort of pulpit, and the usual recess of the Kebla. In the centre of the stone floor was a hole opening to the prison below, and, going outside, and descending a flight of steps, we came to the prison chamber, about eight paces square ; the door, now broken and leaning against the wall, like the doors in the

sepulchres of the kings at Jerusalem, was a slab cut from the solid stone, and turning on a pivot. On the opposite side were three small holes, opening to another chamber, which was the tomb of the Baptist. I looked in, but all was dark ; the Mussulman told me that the body only was there ; that the prophet was beheaded at the request of the wife of a king, and I forget where he said the head was. This may be the prison where the great forerunner of the Lord was beheaded ; at least no man can say that it is not ; and leaving it with the best disposition to believe, I ascended to the ruined palace of Herod, his persecutor and murderer. Thirty or forty columns were still standing, the monuments of the departed greatness of its former tenant. On one side, towards the north-east, where are the ruins of a gate, there is a double range of Ionic columns. I counted more than sixty, and, from the fragments I was constantly meeting, it would seem as if a double colonnade had extended all around.

The palace of Herod stands on a table of land, on the very summit of the hill, overlooking every part of the surrounding country ; and such were the exceeding softness and beauty of the scene, even under the wildness and waste of Arab cultivation, that the city seemed smiling in the midst of her desolation. All around was a beautiful valley, watered by running streams, and covered by a rich carpet of grass, sprinkled with wild flowers of every hue, and beyond, stretched like

an open book before me, a boundary of fruitful mountains, the vine and the olive rising in terraces to their very summits; there, day after day, the haughty Herod had sat in his royal palace; and looking out upon all these beauties, his heart had become hardened with prosperity; here, among these still towering columns, the proud monarch had made a supper "to his lords, and high captains, and chief estates of Galilee;" here the daughter of Herodias, Herod's brother's wife, "danced before him, and the proud king promised with an oath to give her whatever she should ask even to the half of his kingdom." And while the feast and dance went on, the "head of John the Baptist was brought in a charger and given to the damsel." And Herod has gone, and Herodias, Herod's brother's wife, has gone, and "the lords, and the high captains, and the chief estates of Galilee" are gone; but the ruins of the palace in which they feasted are still here; the mountains and valleys which beheld their revels are here; and oh, what a comment upon the vanity of worldly greatness, a Fellah was turning his plough around one of the columns. I was sitting on a broken capital under a fig-tree by its side, and I asked him what were the ruins that we saw; and while his oxen were quietly cropping the grass that grew among the fragments of the marble floor, he told me that they were the ruins of the palace of a king—he believed, of the Christians; and while pilgrims from every quarter of the world turn aside from their path to do homage in the prison of his be-

headed victim, the Arab who was driving his plough among the columns of his palace knew not the name of the haughty Herod. Even at this distance of time I look back with a feeling of uncommon interest upon my ramble among those ruins, talking with the Arab ploughman of the king who built it, leaning against a column which perhaps had often supported the haughty Herod, and looking out from this scene of desolation and ruin upon the most beautiful country in the Holy Land.

Descending from the ruined city, we continued our way along the valley. In about an hour we came to the village of Beteen, standing on the side of a mountain, overlooking a fertile valley: the women were in the fields, as I had seen them before, picking the tares from the wheat. Riding along through a succession of beautiful valleys, nearly all the way close to the banks of a running stream, and stopping under a fine shade of olives for our noon-day meal, we came to Sanpoor, standing on an insulated hill, commanding an extensive view of the country, and once a strongly fortified place, with a tower and walls, supposed to have been built during the time of the crusades, but now totally demolished and in ruins. About three years ago it was taken after a six months' siege, by Abdallah Pacha, the great soldier of the Sultan; the insurgent inhabitants were put to the sword, and their houses burnt and razed to the ground. A little beyond this, the continued falls of rain have formed a small

lake. In an hour and a half we passed the village of Abattia; and late in the afternoon we fell in with a party of Turkish travellers, one of whom was the "biggest in the round" of all the men I had seen in the East. His noble horse seemed to complain of his extraordinary burden. At about six o'clock we had left the beautiful country of Samaria, and were entering the little town of Jennin, or Janeen, standing on the borders of Galilee, at the commencement of the great plain of Jezreel.

Early in the morning, leaving the village of Janeen, we entered almost immediately the great plain of Jezreel. The holy places were now crowding upon me in rapid succession. I was on my way to Nazareth, the city of Joseph and Mary, where Christ spent nearly all his life; but I turned off the direct road to do homage on Mount Tabor, recognized as the scene of our Saviour's transfiguration. We passed two miserable villages, looking at a distance like little mounds or excrescences on the surface of the great plain; and, turning to the right, around the mountains of Samaria, saw afar off the lofty summit of Hermon, crowned with a sheik's tomb. On the right, towards the Sea of Galilee, was the village of Bisan, the Bethshan of the Bible, where the Philistines fastened the bodies of Saul and his three sons to the wall after they had fallen in Mount Gilboa.*

* Joshua xvii. 11; 1 Samuel xxxi. 12; Kings iv. 12.

Before us, and the most striking and imposing object on the whole of the great plain of Esdraelon, was Mount Tabor. It stands perfectly isolated; rising alone from the plain in a rounded tapering form, like a truncated cone, to the height of three thousand feet, covered with trees, grass, and wild flowers from the base to its summit, and presenting the combination so rarely found in natural scenery of the bold and the beautiful. At twelve o'clock we were at the miserable village of Deborah, at the foot of the mountain, supposed to be the place where Deborah the prophetess, who then judged Israel, and Barak and "ten thousand men after him, descended upon Sisera, and discomfited him and all his chariots, even nine hundred chariots of iron, and all the people that were with him." The men and boys had all gone out to their daily labour, and we tried to persuade a woman to guide us to the top of the mountain, but she turned away with contempt; and, having had some practice in climbing, we moved around its sides until we found a regular path, and ascended nearly to the top without dismounting. The path wound around the mountain, and gave us a view from all its different sides, every step presenting something new, and more and more beautiful, until all was completely forgotten and lost in the exceeding loveliness of the view from the summit. Stripped of every association, and considered merely as an elevation commanding a view of unknown valleys and mountains, I never saw a mountain which, for

beauty of scene, better repaid the toil of ascending it; and I need not say what an interest was given to every feature when we saw in the valley beneath the large plain of Jezreel, the great battleground of nations; on the south the supposed range of Hermon, with whose dew the psalmist compares the "pleasantness of brethren dwelling together in unity;" beyond, the ruined village of Endor, where dwelled the witch who raised up the prophet Samuel; and near it the little city of Nain, where our Saviour raised from the dead the widow's son; on the east, the mountains of Gilboa, "where Saul, and his armour-bearer, and his three sons, fell upon their swords, to save themselves from falling into the hands of the Philistines;" beyond, the Sea of Galilee, or Lake of Genesareth, the theatre of our Saviour's miracles, where, in the fourth watch of the night, he appeared to his terrified disciples, walking on the face of the waters; and to the north, on a lofty eminence, high above the top of Tabor, the city of Saphet, supposed to be the ancient Bethulia, alluded to in the words "a city that is set on a hill cannot be hid."

But, if the tradition be true, we need not go beyond the mountain itself, for it was on this high mountain that "Jesus Christ took Peter, and James, and John his brother apart," and gave them a glimpse of his glory before his death, when "his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light; and a voice out of the cloud was heard, saying, This is my

beloved son, in whom I am well pleased." I stood on the very spot where this holy scene was enacted. Within the walls of an old fortress is a ruined grotto, with three altars, built as Peter had proposed, one for Christ, one for Moses, and one for Elias; where, once a year, the monks of the convent, and all the Christians of Nazareth, ascending in solemn procession, offer adoration and praise to the Saviour of the world. The top of the mountain is an oval, about half a mile long, and encompassed by a wall built by Josephus when he was governor of Galilee; within this enclosure is a table of luxuriant grass and wild flowers, sending forth such an odour, and looking so clean and refreshing, that, when my horse lay down and rolled in it, I felt the spirit of boyhood coming over me again, and was strongly tempted to follow his example.

We descended and hurried on towards Nazareth. Winding along the valley, an accidental turn brought the mountain again full before me, alone, and strongly defined against the sky; the figure of a man could have been seen standing on the top as on a pedestal. I know not whether, in the splendid effort of Raphael that now adorns the Vatican, he had any idea of this particular mountain; but I remember that, looking back upon it at this time, it struck me that it was exactly the scene which the daring genius of the painter might have selected for the transfiguration of the Son of God.

In two hours and a half we were in the vale of

Naszera, and approaching the city of Nazareth. The valley is fertile, surrounded by hills, and the city stands at the extreme end on the side of an elevation. The houses are white, and in the place of Christ's residence, as of his birth, the mosque, with its minaret is the most conspicuous object, and next to that the convent. A little on this side is a Greek church, built, as the Greeks say, over the spot where the angel Gabriel appeared to the Virgin Mary, and announced to her the birth of a son "of whose kingdom there should be no end." A little farther is a fountain, where the Virgin is said to have been in the habit of going for water: a procession of women with large jars on their heads, was coming out from the city, and one of them, a Christian woman, gave us to drink; a comfortable-looking monk, taking his afternoon's promenade in the suburbs, was the first to greet us, and following him, we dismounted at the door of the convent—one of the largest in the Holy Land.

In the city where Joseph and Mary lived, and where our Saviour passed thirty years of his life, there is of course no lack of holy places, and, as in the case of the church of the Holy Sepulchre, as many of these places as possible have, with admirable economy, been brought under one roof. The Church of the Annunciation, within the walls of the convent, next to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, is the finest in the Holy Land. There are two organs, and the walls and pillars are hung with red damask. Under the principal altar is

the house of Joseph and Mary, consisting of several grottoes, kitchen, parlour, and bed-room. In front of the same altar are two granite columns designating the spots where the angel and the Virgin stood at the time of the annunciation. One of them is broken off below, and the upper part hangs from the roof—the monks say by a miracle, but others by mortar ; and all over Galilee the miraculous pillar is celebrated for its virtue in curing diseases. Outside the convent are the workshop where Joseph wrought at his carpenter's trade, and the synagogue where Christ, by reading the book of Isaiah and applying to himself the words of the prophet, so exasperated the Jews that they rose up and thrust him out of the city. A lamp was burning dimly at the altar, and an Arab Christian prostrating himself before it ; and, lastly, I saw the table on which, say the monks, our Lord dined with his disciples both before and after the resurrection, a large flat stone about three feet high, and fifteen paces in circumference. I was about knocking off a piece as a memorial, when the friar checked me, and turning round a nail in one of the many holes in the surface, he worked off a little powder, laid it carefully in a paper, and gave it me.

In my humour there was no great interest in visiting these so called holy places ; but here was the city in which our Saviour had been brought up ; I could walk in the same streets where he had walked, and look out upon the same hills and valleys, and a man of a warm and impassioned

piety might imagine that, in breathing the same atmosphere, he was drawing nearer to the person of the Saviour. I went back to the convent, joined the monks at vespers, listened to the solemn chant and the majestic tones of the organ, and went to bed.

Early in the morning, changing for the first time the horses with which I had come from Jerusalem, I took a Christian of Nazareth for my guide, and started for Tiberias and the Sea of Galilee. In about an hour we came to Cana of Galilee, where our Saviour performed his first miracle by turning water into wine. At the entrance of the village is a fountain where the women were drawing water in large jars, and near it a Greek church built over the house of the young man at whose wedding the miracle was performed. Here, too, are large stone jars, being, as the monks say, the identical vessels in which the water was changed. War, bloody and relentless war, has swept over the little Cana of Galilee; fire and sword have laid waste and destroyed the peaceful village in which Christ met the rejoicing wedding-party.

In about two hours, leaving Mount Hermon and Mount Tabor on our right, we passed through the field where the disciples plucked the corn on the Sabbath day; about half an hour farther on is the mountain of the Beatitude, where Christ preached the sermon on the mount. Whether the tradition be true or not, it was just the place where, in those primitive days, or even in the state of

society which exists now in the Holy Land, such an event might have taken place; the preacher standing a little distance up the hill, and the multitude sitting down below him. Indeed, so strikingly similar in all its details is the state of society existing here now to that which existed in the time of our Saviour, that I remember, when standing on the ruins of a small church supposed to cover the precise spot where Christ preached that compendium of goodness and wisdom, it struck me that if I or any other man should preach new and strange things, the people would come out from the cities and villages to listen and dispute, as they did under the preaching of our Lord.

Half an hour farther on we came to a large stone, on which, tradition says, our Saviour sat when he blessed the five loaves and two fishes, and the immense multitude ate and were filled. These localities may be, and probably are, mere monkish conjectures; but one thing we know, that our Saviour and his disciples journeyed on this road; that he looked upon the same scenes, and that, in all probability, somewhere within the range of my eye these deeds and miracles were actually performed. At all events, before me, in full view, was the hallowed Lake of Genesareth. Here we cannot be wrong; Christ walked upon that sea, and stilled the raging of its waters, and preached the tidings of salvation to the cities on its banks. But where are those cities now? Chorazin and Bethsaida, and thou too, Capernaum, that wast exalted unto heaven! The whole lake is spread

out before, almost from where the Jordan enters unto where that hallowed stream passes on to discharge its waters in the bituminous lake which covers the guilty cities ; but there is no city, no habitation of man ; all is still and quiet as the grave. But I am wrong ; towards the southern extremity of the lake I see the city of Tabbereeah, the miserable relic of the ancient Tiberias, another of the proud cities of Herod, standing on the very shore of the sea, a mere speck in the distance ; its walls and turrets, its mosques and minarets, telling that it is possessed by the persecutors and oppressors of the followers of Christ.

We descended the mountains, and, passing under the walls of the city, continued on about half an hour to a large bath erected by Ibrahim Pacha over the hot springs of Emmaus, celebrated for their medicinal properties ; and, finding that we could pass the night there, left our baggage and returned to the city. The walls and circular towers, Moorish in their construction, gave it an imposing appearance ; outside the gate was the tent of a harlot, that unhappy class of women not being permitted, by the Mussulman law, to enter the walls ; within, all was in a most ruined and desolate condition ; a great part being entirely vacant, and, where the space was occupied, the houses or huts were built far apart.

Tiberias was the third of the holy cities of the Jews ; and here, as at Jerusalem and Hebron, the unhappy remnant of a fallen people still hover around the graves of their fathers, and, though

degraded and trampled under foot, are still looking for the restoration of their temporal kingdom. There were two classes of Jews, Eastern and European, the latter being Muscovites, Poles, and Germans ; all had come merely to lay their bones in the Holy Land, and were now supported by the charity of their brethren in Europe. There were two synagogues, and two schools or colleges, and it was an interesting sight to see them, old men tottering on the verge of the grave, and beardless boys, studying in the same mysterious book what they believed to be the road to heaven.

I inquired for their rabbi, and they asked me whether I meant the Asiatic or European. I told them the greater of the two, and was conducted by a crowd to his house. I had no diffidence in those days, and invited myself to sit down and talk with him. He was an old man, and told me that they were all poor, living upon precarious charity ; and that their brethren in America were so far off that they had forgotten the land of their fathers. Everything looked so comfortable in his house, that I tried to get an invitation to stay all night ; but the old rabbi was too cunning for me. It was a fête day, but my notes are so imperfect that I cannot make out whether it was their Sabbath. All were dressed in their best apparel, the women sitting in the doors or on the terraces, their heads adorned with large gold and silver ornaments, and their eyes sparkling like diamonds.

Returning, I noticed more particularly the

ruins beyond the southern wall. They extend for more than a mile, and there is no doubt that this ground was covered by the ancient city. The plain runs back about half a mile to the foot of the mountain, and in the sides of the mountain are long ranges of tombs. It was from one of these tombs, said our guide, that the man possessed of devils rushed forth when our Saviour rebuked the unclean spirits, and made them enter into a herd of swine, which ran violently down a steep place into the sea, and were drowned.

Passing the bath, I walked on to a point where I could see the extreme end of the lake, forming near the other side into the Jordan. It was a beautiful evening, still and quiet as the most troubled spirit could wish. The sides of the mountains were green and verdant, but there were no trees, and no rustling of the wind among the branches; not a boat was upon the lake; and, except the city of Tiberias, which, enclosed within its walls, gave no signs of life, I was the only living being on its shores; I almost felt myself alone in the world; and surely, if ever there was a spot where a man might be willing to live alone, it would be there. There was no desolation, but rather beauty, in the loneliness; and when the sun was setting I was bathing my feet in the waters of the hallowed lake, and fast falling into the belief that I could sit me down on its banks, "the world forgetting, by the world forgot;" but just then I saw filing under the walls of Tiberias a long procession of men. They were coming to the baths

of Emmaus ; and, in a few moments, I, that was musing as if I were alone in the world, was struggling with naked Arabs for a place in the bathing apartment.

A large bathing-house has been built over the hot springs by Ibrahim Pacha ; a circular building, with a dome, like the baths at Constantinople ; and under the dome a large marble reservoir, twenty feet in diameter, and nearly six feet deep, into which the Arabs slipped off from the sides like turtles, darkening the white marble and the clear water with their swarthy skins. I could not bear the heat, which seemed to me scalding. A separate room, with a single bath, had been built expressly for the precious body of Ibrahim Pacha ; and, as he was not at hand to use it, I had it prepared for myself. Here was a theme for moralizing ! I had stood on the top of the pyramids, on Mount Sinai, and the shores of the Dead Sea ; I had been in close contact with greatness in the tombs of Augustus, Agamemnon, and the Scipios ; but what were these compared with bathing in the same tub with the great bulldog-warrior of the East, the terrible Ibrahim Pacha ? I spread my rug in an adjoining chamber ; the long window opened directly upon the Sea of Galilee ; for more than an hour my eyes were fixed upon its calm and silvery surface ; and the last sounds that broke upon my ears were the murmurs of its waters.

Early in the morning we started. Stopping again at Tiberias, the soldier at the gate told us

that a European had arrived during the night. I hunted him out, and found him to be an Englishman, as I afterward learned, a merchant of Damascus, and a sportsman, equipped with shooting-jacket, gun, dog, &c. He was in a miserable hovel, and, having just risen, was sitting apart from the Arab family; his rug and coverlet were lying on the mud floor not yet rolled up; and he seemed in a most rueful mood, objurgating all travel for pleasure, and whistling earnestly "There's no place like home." I knew his humour, for I had often felt it myself, and could hardly keep from laughing. He was not more than half dressed, and reminded me of the caricature of an Englishman standing in his nether garment, with a piece of cloth in one hand and a pair of scissors in the other, as not being resolved after what fashion to have his coat cut.

"I am an English gentleman, and naked I stand here,
Musing in my mind what raiment I shall wear;
For now I will wear this, and now I will wear that,
And now I will wear—I cannot tell what."

We spent half an hour together, and parted. He was an old stager, and did not travel for scenery, associations, and all that, but he could tell every place where he had bagged a bird, from Damascus to the Sea of Galilee.

Stopping for a moment at the only monument of antiquity, the church of St. Peter, a long building, with a vaulted stone roof, built, as the monks say, over the place where the house of St. Peter stood, and the corner-stone laid by our Saviour;

a burly monk was in the confessional, and a young Christian girl pouring into his greedy ears perhaps a story of unhappy love, we left for the last time the gate* of the city, the tent of the harlot standing there still, and commenced our journey along the shore of the sea.

A short distance from Tiberias we crossed the point of a mountain running down into the lake, and in about an hour came to a small Mohammedan village, called Magdol, supposed to be the Magdala into which our Saviour came when he had sent away the multitude after feeding them with the seven loaves and two fishes. It was along this shore that Jesus Christ began to preach the glad tidings of salvation to a ruined world; eighteen hundred years ago, walking by this sea, he saw two brethren, "Simon Peter and Andrew his brother, casting their nets into the sea, toiling all day and catching no fish; and he told them to thrust forth from the land; and their nets brake and their ships sank with the multitude of fish; and he said unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men; and they forsook all and followed him."

We were now crossing a rich valley, through which several streams were running and emptying into the lake; and towards the other end, at some distance from the sea, we came to a small mound

* About six months after this gate was swallowed up by an earthquake; the wall and the whole of that quarter of the city were thrown down and demolished, and a great portion of the inhabitants buried under the ruins.

of crumbling bricks and stones, almost overgrown with grass; and this is all that remains of the city of Bethsaida, the city of Peter, and Andrew, and Philip. If we had diverged a hundred yards one way or the other, I should have passed without seeing it. A short distance off, among the hills that border the plain, alike in ruins, is her sister city Chorazin. Leaving the valley and crossing a rude point of the mountain, which runs boldly to the lake, the road being so narrow that we were obliged to unload the baggage-horse, we descended to the plains of Genesareth, the richest and most fertile plain on the shores of the lake, and, perhaps, for a combination of natural advantages, soil, beauty of scenery, climate, and temperature, exceeded by no place in the world. A short distance across the plain we came to a little mill, set in motion by a large, clear, and beautiful stream, conveyed in two stone aqueducts. Four or five Arab families lived there, in huts made with palm leaves; the men lay stretched on the ground, lulled to sleep by the murmur of the falling waters.

From here to Talhoun, the supposed site of Capernaum, the rich plain of Genesareth was lying a wild and luxuriant waste, entirely uncultivated and neglected, except in one place, where an Arab was ploughing a small plot for tobacco. Approaching, the single Arab footpath becomes lost, and the road which our Saviour had often followed upon his great errand of redemption was so overgrown with long grass, bushes,

and weeds, that they rose above the back of my horse, and I found it easier to dismount and pick my way on foot.

The ruins of Capernaum extend more than a mile along the shore and back towards the mountain, but they were so overgrown with grass and bushes that it was difficult to move among them. Climbing upon a high wall, which, though ruined itself, seemed proud of its pre-eminence above the rest, I had a full view of the ruins of the city, of the plains of Genesareth, and the whole extent of the Sea of Galilee, from where the Jordan comes down from the mountains, until it passes out and rolls on to the Dead Sea. It is about sixteen miles long and six wide; at each end is the narrow valley of the Jordan; on the east a range of mountains, rising, not precipitously, but rolling back from the shore, green and verdant, but destitute of trees; on the west are mountains, in two places coming down to the lake, and the rest is a rich and beautiful, but wild and uncultivated plain. It was by far the most imposing view I had enjoyed, and I am not sure that in all my journeying in the East I had a more interesting moment than when I sat among the ruins of Capernaum, looking out upon the Lake of Genesareth.

Travellers have often compared this lake with the Lake of Geneva. I could see very little resemblance; it is not so large, and wants the variety of scenery of the Lake of Geneva, and, above all, the lofty summit of Mount Blanc. The

banks of the Lake of Geneva are crowded from one end to the other with villages and villas, and its surface is covered with boats, and all the hurry and bustle of a travelling population ; this is in all the wildness of nature, all neglected and uncultivated ; and, except the little town of Tiberias, not a habitation, not even an Arab's hut, is seen upon its banks, not a solitary boat upon its waters. A single pelican was floating at my feet, and, like myself, he was alone. He was so near me that I could have hit him with a stone ; he was the only thing I saw that had life, and he seemed looking at me with wonder, and asking me why I still lingered in the desolate city. I was looking upon the theatre of mighty miracles ; it was here that, when a great tempest arose, and the ship was covered with waves, and his disciples cried out, " Save us, or we perish ! " Christ rose from his sleep, and rebuked the wind and the sea, and there was a great calm ; and here too it was that in the fourth watch of the night he appeared to his terrified disciples, walking on the face of the sea, and crying out to them, " It is I, be not afraid ; " and again the wind ceased, and there was a calm.

But this scene was not always so desolate. The shores of this lake were once covered with cities, in which Christ preached on the Sabbath day, healed the sick, gave sight to the blind, cleansed the lepers, cast out devils, and raised the dead. Bethsaida and Chorazin I had passed, and I was standing among the ruins of Caper-

naum, the city that was exalted to heaven in our Saviour's love, where Christ first raised his warning voice, saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand;" and I could feel the fulfilment of his prophetic words, "Woe unto thee, Chorazin, woe unto thee, Bethsaida; it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you. And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shall be brought down to hell, and it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for thee." I am aware that lately there has been some dispute whether this be the site of Capernaum, but I had now passed along the whole western shore of the lake, and, if this be not Capernaum, my horse's hoofs must have trampled upon the city of our Saviour's love without my knowing where that city stood.

I thought to enhance the interest of this day's journey by making my noonday meal from the fish of the Lake of Genesareth; obliged to go back by the mills, and, having on my way up seen a net drying on the shore, I had roused the sleeping Arabs, and they had promised to throw it for me; but, when I returned, I found that, like Simon Peter and the sons of Zebedee, "they had toiled all day, and had caught no fish."

Here we turned away from the consecrated lake, and fixed our eyes on the end of my day's journey, the towering city of Zaffad. But the interest of the day was not yet over. Ascending

for about an hour from the shore of the lake, we came to the great caravan road from Jerusalem to Damascus, and a little off from this to a large khan : and within this khan, according to tradition, is the pit into which Joseph was thrown by his brethren before they sold him to the Ishmaelites. The khan, like all other caravansaries, is a large stone building, enclosing a hollow square, with small chambers around it for the accommodation of caravan travellers. The pit is a solid piece of masonwork, like a well ; and, when I saw it, was nearly full of water. Both Mussulmans and Christians reverence this as a holy place ; near it are a Mussulman mosque and a Christian chapel ; and few travellers pass this way, whether Mussulmans or Christians, without prostrating themselves before the altar of Joseph the Just.

In all probability, the legend establishing this locality has no better foundation than most of the others in the Holy Land ; but I cannot help remarking that I do not attach the importance assigned by others to the circumstance of its distance from Hebron, at that time Jacob's dwelling-place. We know that Joseph's brethren were feeding their father's flock at Shechem ; and, when Joseph came thither "wandering in the field, he inquired after his brethren, and a man told him they are departed hence, for I heard them say, Let us go to Dothan ; and Joseph went after his brethren, and found them in Dothan." If there be any good reason for calling this place Dothan, to me it does not seem at all

strange, that, in the pastoral state of society which existed then, and still exists unchanged, Jacob's sons had driven their flocks to a pasture-ground two days farther on; and, affording a striking illustration of the scene supposed to have taken place here, while we were loitering around the khan, a caravan of merchants from Damascus came up, on their way to Egypt, and the buying or selling of slaves, white or black, being still a part of the trade between these places, I have no doubt that, if I had offered Paul for sale, they would have bought him and carried him to Egypt, where, perhaps, he might have risen to be a grand vizier. From hence we continued mounting again, the city of Zaffad seeming to detach itself more and more, and to rise higher and higher above surrounding objects, and the atmosphere growing perceptibly colder; and at four o'clock we had reached the city.

Zaffad is the last of the four holy cities of the Jews. My intercourse with the Jews in the Holy Land had been so interesting, that I determined to prolong it to the last, and, having heard a favourable report of a Jew, the English consular agent at Zaffad, I rode directly to his house. He was a very poor and a very amiable man. I went with him to the governor, showed my firman, and demanded permission to see the grotto of Jacob. The governor was sick, and told me that God had sent me there expressly to cure him. Since my successful experiment upon the governor of Hebron, I began to think doctoring governors was

my forte, and, after feeling his pulse, and making him stick out his tongue, upon the principle that a governor was a governor, and what was good for one was good for another, I gave him an emetic which almost turned him inside out, and completely cured him. One thing I cannot help observing, not with a view of impeaching anything that is written, but as illustrating the state of society in the East, that if a skilful physician, by the application of his medical science, should raise an Arab from what, without such application, would be his bed of death, the ignorant people would be very likely to believe it a miracle, and to follow him with that degree of faith which would give credence to the saving virtue of touching the "hem of his garment."

From the palace of the governor we ascended to the ruined fortress crowning the very top of the hill, and from one of the windows of the tower I looked down upon an extensive prospect of hills and valleys; the Lake of Genesareth seemed almost at my feet; the stately and majestic Tabor was far below me, and beyond was the great plain of Jezreel, stretching off to the mountains of Carmel and the shores of the Mediterranean. In all my wanderings in the most remote places, I had been constantly seeing what I may call the handwriting of Napoleon. In Italy, Poland, Germany, and the burnt and rebuilt capital of the czars, at the pyramids and cataracts of the Nile, and now, on this almost inaccessible height, the turrets of the fortress were battered by the French cannon.

We descended again to the Jews' quarter. Their houses were on the side of the hill, overlooking a beautiful valley. It was the last day of eating unleavened bread, and the whole Jewish population, in their best attire, were sitting on the terraces and on the tops of their houses, in gay, striking, and beautiful costumes, the women with their gold and silver ornaments on their heads and around their necks, enjoying the balmy mildness of a Syrian sunset ; and, when the shades of evening had driven them to their houses, I heard all around me, and for the last time in the Holy Land, rising in loud and solemn chants, the Songs of Solomon and the Psalms of David.

There are about two hundred families of Israelites in Zaffad ; they come there only to lay their bones in the land of their fathers ; have no occupation or means of livelihood ; spend all their time in reading the Bible and Talmud, and live upon the charity of their European brethren. The agent told me that during the late revolution they had been stripped of everything ; that, as at Hebron, they had suffered robbery, murder, and rapine ; that the governor had allowed them to take refuge in the fortress, where they remained, three thousand in number, without a mat to lie on or bread to put in their mouths ; many of them had died of starvation, and the living remained beside the bodies of the dead till the whirlwind passed by ; that, thinking himself safe under his foreign protection, he had remained below, but that his hat with the consular cockade

had been torn off and trampled under foot ; and his wife, a lovely young woman sitting by our side, then not more than nineteen, had been thrown down, whipped, and he did not tell me so, but I inferred that far worse had befallen her ; and the brutal Turk who committed the outrage still lived, and he met him in the streets every day.

During the evening a Christian from Nazareth came in, and it struck me as an interesting circumstance that I was introduced to him as a brother Nazarene.

A Jew welcomed me to the first of the holy cities, and a Jew accompanied me on my exit from the last. Both received me into their houses, and gave me the best that they had, and both refused to accept a price for their hospitality. I had a hard day's journey before me. My Jewish friend had told me that it would be necessary to make a very early start to arrive at Acre that night, but it so happened that I set off late. We had a ravine to cross, the worst I had met in Syria. Paul and I were some distance ahead, when we heard the shouting of our muleteer ; our baggage mule had fallen and caught on the brink of a precipice, where he was afraid to move until we came to his help ; and this and the exceeding roughness of the road detained us so much, that, when we reached the other side of the ravine, my guide told me that it would be utterly impossible to reach Acre that day. I would have returned, but I did not want to throw myself again upon the hospitality of my Jew friend. I was in a bad

condition for roughing it; but, at the risk of being obliged to sleep in some miserable Arab hut, or perhaps under the walls of Acre, I pushed on.

For two or three hours there was no improvement in the road; we were obliged to dismount several times, and could not do more than pick our way on a walk. We then came to the village of Rinah, situated in a fine olive-grove. The villagers told us it would be impossible to reach Acre before night, but a bribe to my guide induced him to lead off on a brisk trot. Of every man we met we asked the distance; at length we came to one who told us he thought we might do it. I could almost always tell beforehand the answer we should get; when we came to a lazy fellow, sprawling on the ground and basking in the sun, he invariably said no; and when we met an Arab, riding nimbly on his mule, or striding over the ground as if he had something to do and meant to do it, his answer was always yes, and so we were alternately cheered and discouraged. We watered our horses at the stream without dismounting. About midday Paul handed me a boiled fowl, holding on by one leg while I pulled at the other; the fowl came apart, and so we dined on horseback without stopping. I am not sure, but I do not think that there was anything particularly interesting on the road; once, riding over a fine, well-cultivated valley, we saw at a distance on the right two handsome villages, and

standing alone, something which appeared to be a large white mosque or sheik's tomb.

At about four o'clock we came in sight of the Mediterranean, the great plain of Acre, the low circular shore extending to Caipha and Mount Carmel, and before us, at a great distance, on an extreme point in the sea, the ancient Ptolemais, the St. Jean d'Acre of Richard and the Crusaders. Still we were not safe. The sun was settling away towards my distant home when we reached the shore of the sea. I shall never forget my sensations at the moment when I gained that shore; after the Red Sea and the Dead Sea, and the Sea of Galilee, it seemed an old acquaintance, and I spurred my horse into the waters to greet it. But I had no time to dally, for as yet I was not secure. I joined the last of the loungers outside the walls; the heavy gates were swung to as I entered; and when I pushed my jaded horse over the threshold of the gate I felt as happy as the gallant leader of the Crusaders, when he planted the banner of England upon the walls of Acre. Soon in the peaceful cell of the convent, I forgot my toil and anxiety, as well as Richard and the holy wars. The night before I had slept by the quiet waters of Galilee, and now the last sounds that I heard were the rolling waves of the Mediterranean.


CHAPTER XIX.

A ride on Donkey-back.—Caipha.—Adventure with a Consul.
— Mount Carmel. — The Plain of Jezreel. — Convent of
Mount Carmel.—Kindness of the Monks.—Curiosity gratified.

I ROSE next morning much fatigued. My strength had been greatly impaired by sickness and exposure, and I intended to give myself a day of rest, instead of which I committed an act of folly. The night before I left Jerusalem, I had seen, at the house of my friend Mr. Whiting, the poetical pilgrimage of M. de la Martine; I had not time to read it through, and by chance opened it at the chapter containing the particulars of his visit to Caipha, and the glowing account which he gave of the two sisters of the Sardinian consul had inflamed in some degree my imagination. I had found it one of the most annoying circumstances attendant upon travelling in the East, that, in spite of the poetical accounts of Eastern beauty, though I had seen Georgian and Circassian women, I had never yet met with anything that to my mind was equal to the beauty of the European and American women. I had passed Caipha, and it was a direct retrograde movement to go there; but early in the morning, as I was walking on the ramparts of Acre, I looked back towards the little city, and the

beautiful creations of the poet rose before me in most ravishing colours. I was worn down. There was no physician in Acre ; and, perhaps, to bask an hour in the sunshine of beauty might revive and restore me. Paul too was under the weather ; ever since his fall from the dromedary he had wanted bleeding, and it might do him good. In short, I had been rambling for months among ruins and old cities, working as hard as if I were to be paid for it by the day ; I had had enough of these things, and one glimpse of a beautiful girl was worth more to me at that moment than all the ruins of the Holy Land ; but I would not admit to myself, much less to Paul, that I was making this retrograde movement merely to see a couple of pretty faces, and I ordered horses for Caipha and Mount Carmel. Horses, however, were not to be had, and we were obliged to take donkeys, which I considered unlucky. For the first time since I left Jerusalem, I brushed my toubouch, my blue jacket, and grey pantaloons.

I started on donkey-back. Caipha is distant a ride of about three hours and a half from Acre, all the way along the shore of the sea. About half an hour from Acre we crossed the river Belus in a boat. It was on the banks of this stream that Elijah killed the four hundred prophets of Baal, gathered unto Mount Carmel by the orders of Ahab. A dead level plain, fertile but uncultivated, stretched back for many miles into the interior, and in the front to the foot of Mount Carmel. We rode close along the shore, where the



sand was every moment washed and hardened by the waves. The sea was calm, but the wrecks on the shore, of which we counted seventeen on our way to Caipha, told us that the elements of storm and tempest might lurk under a fair and beautiful face ; all which was àpropos to my intended visit. On the way I thought it necessary to let Paul into part of my plans, and told him that I wanted to stop at the house of the Sardinian consul. Paul asked me whether I had any letter to him ; I told him no ; and, by degrees, disclosed to him the reason of my wanting to go there ; and he surprised me by telling me that he knew the young ladies very well ; and when I asked him how and when, he told me that he had assisted them in their cooking when he stopped there three years before with Mr. Wellesley. This was rather a damper ; but I reflected that Haidee, on her beautiful little island, prepared with her own hands the food for the shipwrecked, and revived at the thought.

We were now approaching Caipha. The city was walled all around ; without the walls was a Mohammedan burying-ground ; and the gate, like the shield of Homer's heroes, was covered with a tough bull's hide. I rode directly to the consul's house ; it was a miserable-looking place, and on the platform directly before the door stood a most unpoetical heap of dirt and rubbish ; but I didn't mind that ; the door was open, and I went in. The table was set for dinner, and I could not help remarking a few rather questionable spots on the table-cloth ; but I didn't mind that ; knives, forks,

and plates were a spectacle to which I had long been unaccustomed, and my heart warmed even to the empty platters. I thought I had come at the witching moment, and I felt as sure of my dinner as if I had it already under my jacket. The consul was sitting on a settee, and I began the acquaintance by asking him if there was an American consul there. He told me no; at which I was very much surprised, as we had one at Jaffa, not so much of a place as Caipha; and I invited myself to a seat beside the consul, and made myself agreeable. I soon found, however, that I was not so pleasant a fellow as I thought. The consul answered my questions, but his manner might be interpreted, "Don't you see you are keeping the dinner waiting?" I didn't mind that, however, but talked about the necessity of my government having a consul there, to entertain American travellers, and suggested that at Jaffa the government had given the appointment to the then acting Sardinian consul; still my friend was impenetrable. I tried him upon several other topics, but with no great success. During this time the mother entered, evidently in dishabille, and occasionally I got a glimpse of a pair of fine black eyes peeping at me through the door. At last, when I found that he was bent on not asking me to dine, I rose suddenly, made a hundred apologies for my haste, shook him cordially by the hand, and, with the most consummate impudence, told him I would call again on my return from Mount Carmel. Paul rather crowed over me, for he had met and

spoken to the young ladies, and in the same place where he had seen them before.

In about an hour we had reached the top of Mount Carmel; this celebrated mountain is the only great promontory upon the low coast of Palestine, and it is, beyond all comparison, the finest mountain in the Holy Land. The traveller at this day may realize fully the poetical description by the inspired writers, of the "excellency" of Mount Carmel. The pine, oak, olive, and laurel grew above a beautiful carpet of grass and wild flowers, and from amid this luxuriance I looked out upon the plains of Acre, the little city stretching out on a low point, like a mere speck in the water; and beyond, the mountains of Lebanon; on the left, along the shore of the Mediterranean to the ruins of Cesarea, the once proud city of Herod and of Cornelius the Centurion, where Paul made Felix tremble; in front, the dark blue sea, on whose bosom two transports, with Egyptian soldiers on board, were at that time stretching under easy sail from Acre to Alexandria; and behind, the great plain of Jezreel.

One word with regard to this great plain. I had travelled around, and about, and across it; had looked at it from hills and mountains, and I was now on the point of leaving it for ever. This plain, computed to be about fifteen miles square, is the "mighty plain," as it is called, of the ancients, and celebrated for more than three thousand years as the "great battle-ground of

nations." From here Elijah girded up his loins, and ran before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel; it was on this plain that Barak went down, and ten thousand men after him, and discomfited Sisera and all his chariots; it was here that Josiah, king of Judah, disguised himself, that he might fight with Necho, king of Egypt, and fell by the arrows of the Egyptian archers. The Assyrian and the Persian, Jews and Gentiles, Crusaders and Saracens, Egyptians and Turks, Arabs and Frenchmen, warriors of every nation, have poured out their blood on the plains of Esdraelon; and here, said a gentleman whom I met in Palestine skilled in the reading and interpretation of the prophecies, will be fought the great final battle with antichrist, when circumstances which are now supposed to be rapidly developing themselves shall bring together a mighty army of the followers of Christ, under the banner of the cross, to do battle in his name, and sweep from the earth his contemners and opposers.

The convent on Mount Carmel is worthy of the place where it stands, and, like the mountain itself, is the best in the Holy Land. The church, which is unfinished, is intended to be a very fine building, and the interior of the convent is really beautiful. I could hardly believe my own eyes when I saw, in rooms provided for travellers, French bedsteads with curtains, and French dressing-tables. The rules of their order forbid the Carmelite friars to eat meat; but they set me down to such a dinner, to say nothing of the

wines of Mount Lebanon, that, so far as regarded the eating and drinking merely, I was glad I had not invited myself to dine with my friend the consul at Caipha. From my seat at the table I looked out upon the distant sea; the monks were all gathered around me, kind, good men, happy to receive and talk with a stranger; and it is no extravagance to say, that, after having been buffeted about for months, I felt at the moment that I could be almost willing to remain with them for ever. I ought not to tell it, but the fact is, the extraordinary comfort of the convent, and the extraordinary beauty of the scene, drove away all the associations connected with this gathering-place of the prophets. I wanted nothing but what I saw before me. The monks told me that there was fine shooting on the mountain. I could throw myself into the clearest of waters, and bathe, or, with my little boat, could glide over to Caipha or Acre. For an invalid in search of retirement, with every beauty that climate and natural scenery can offer, I know no place superior to the convent at Mount Carmel. It is one of the few places I ever saw where a man could be cheerful and happy in perfect seclusion. Books, the mountain, the sky and the sea, would be companions enough. It would be the sweetest spot on earth for a *very* young couple to test the strength of their poetic dreams; and knocked about and buffeted as I had been, when the superior told me that, in spite of the inscription over the doors of their convents, "*clausura per le donna*," I might build a house

on the spot where I stood, and bring whom I pleased there, it instantly brought to my mind the beautiful birds of Paradise of De la Martine, and my engagements with my friend the consul at Caipha. The whole of the fraternity accompanied me down the side of the mountain; and I beg to except them all, including the cook, from anything I may have said bearing harshly upon the monastic character. The recollection of my engagement, however, began to hurry me. The friars were pussy and shortwinded; one by one they bade me good-bye; and the cook, a most deserving brother, and unnaturally lean for his profession and position in the convent, was the only one who held out to the foot of the mountain. I crossed his hand with a piece of money; Paul kissed it; and, after we had started, turned his head and cried out to the holy cook, "Orate pro mihi,"—"Pray for me."

At Caipha we found the consul in the street. I do not know whether he was expecting us or not; but, whether or no, I considered it my duty to apologize for having stayed so long on the mountain, and accompanied him to his house. Unluckily, it was so late, that Paul said if we stopped we should be shut out from Acre; and when I looked at the sun and the distant city I had great misgivings, but it was only for a moment. The sisters were now dressed up, and standing in a door as I passed. Their dresses were Asiatic, consisting, from the waist downward, of a variety of wrappers, the outermost of which was silk,

hiding the most beautiful figures under a mere bundle of habits. I went into the room and took a glass of lemonade with my watch in my hand. I would not speak of her in the morning, but now, in full dress, the interesting mother, so glowingly described by M. de la Martine, appeared in a costume a great deal beyond what is usually called low in the neck. I do not mention it as a reproach to her, for she was an Arab woman, and it was the custom of her country ; and as to the young ladies—M. de la Martine had never been in America.

I had intended this for a day of rest ; but I had, if possible, a harder task than on the preceding day to reach the city before the gates were closed. We pushed our donkeys till they broke down, and then got off and whipped them on before us. It was like the Irishman working his passage by hauling the towline of the canal boat ; if it was not for the name of the thing, we might as well have walked ; and when I lay down that night in my cell in the convent, I prayed that age might temper enthusiasm ; that even the imagination of M. de la Martine might grow cool, and that old men would pay respect to their lawful wives, and not go in ecstasies about young girls.

CHAPTER XX.

St. Jean d'Acre.—Extortions of the Pacha.—Tyre.—Questionable Company.—Lady Esther Stanhope.—Departure from the Holy Land—Conclusion.

I SHALL say but little of Acre. The age of chivalry is gone for ever, but there is a green spot in every man's memory, a feeble but undying spark of romance in every heart ; and that man's feelings are not to be envied who could walk on the ramparts of St. Jean d'Acre without calling up Richard and Saladin, the Crusaders and the Saracens ; and when the interval of centuries is forgotten, and the imagination is revelling in the scenes of days long passed away, his illusion rises to the evidences of reality as he sees dashing by him a gallant array of Turkish horsemen, with turbans and glittering sabres, as when they sallied forth to drive back from the walls the chivalry of Europe. Near the city is a mount which is still called Richard Cœur de Lion, and from which Napoleon, pointing to the city, said to Murat, "The fate of the East depends upon yonder petty town." Constantinople and the Indies, a new empire in the East, and a change in the face of the whole world ! Eight times he led his veteran sol-

diers to the assault; eleven times he stood the desperate sallies of the Mameluke sabres. British soldiers under Sir Sidney Smith came to the aid of the besieged; the ruins of a breached wall served as a breastwork, the muzzles of British and French muskets touched each other, and the spear heads of their standards were locked together. The bravest of his officers were killed, and the bodies of the dead soldiers lying around putrefied under the burning sun. The Pacha (Djezzar the Butcher) sat on the floor of his palace, surrounded by a heap of gory heads, distributing money to all who brought in the heads of Frenchmen, and he who was destined to overturn every throne in Europe was foiled under the walls of Acre. Three years ago it sustained, under Abdallah Pacha, a long and bloody siege from Ibrahim Pacha; and, when it fell into his hands, was given up to pillage and the flames. It has since been rebuilt, fortified with skill and science, and is now almost impregnable; full of the elite of the Egyptian army under Colonel Sève (formerly aide to Marshal Ney), now Suliman Pacha, and constantly stored with five years' provisions. The Pacha has lately been building fine hospitals for his soldiers, and an Italian apothecary, licensed to kill *secundum artem*, is let loose upon the sick at the low rate of a hundred dollars per annum.

I was so much pleased with the old Arab muleteer who went with me to Mount Carmel, that I hired his donkeys again for another journey.

He was an old Egyptian from Damietta; four of his children had been taken for soldiers, and he and his old wife and three donkeys followed them about wherever they went. He had two wives and sixteen children, and these were all that were left. They were all now stationed at Acre, and, when we started, two of them, not on duty at the time, were with the old man at the convent, arranging the baggage while he was taking his coffee and pipe; they accompanied us to the gate, received the old man's benediction, and returned.

A short distance from the gate we met a Turkish grandee, with his officers, slaves, and attendants. He had formerly been a collector of taxes under Abdallah Pacha, and would have done well as an office-holder under a civilized government, for he had abandoned the falling fortunes of his master in time to slip into the same office under his successor.

Looking back, Acre appeared to much better advantage than from the other side, and the mosque and minaret of Abdallah Pacha were particularly conspicuous. We rode for some distance by the side of an aqueduct, which conveys water from the mountains twenty miles distant to the city of Acre. In the plain towards Acre, two upright pillars, in which the water rose and descended, formed part of the aqueduct. Our road lay across a plain, and several times we picked up musket balls and fragments of bombs, left there by the French and Napoleon. We

passed two palaces of Abdallah Pacha, where the haughty Turk had revelled with his fifty or a hundred wives in all the luxuries of the East. The plain was very extensive, naturally rich, but almost entirely uncultivated. Over an extent of several miles we would perhaps see a single Arab turning up what on the great plain appeared to be merely a few yards; and the oppressive nature of the government is manifest from the fact that, while the whole of this rich plain lies open to any one who chooses to till it, hundreds prefer to drag out a half-starved existence within the walls of Acre; for the fruits of their labour are not their own, and another will reap where they sow; the tax-gatherer comes and looks at the products, and takes not a fifth, or a sixth, nor any other fixed proportion, but as much as the Pacha needs; and the question is not how much he shall take, but how little he shall leave. Taxation, or rather extortion, for it is wrong to call it by so mild a name, from cantars of olives down to single eggs, grinds the Arab to the dust. "And yet," said the old man, "even this is better than our lot under the Sultan; even this we could bear if the Pacha would only spare us our children."

Along this plain we passed a large house, in a garden of oranges, lemons, almonds, and figs, with a row of cypress-trees along the road; formerly the residence of the treasurer of Abdallah Pacha. He himself had been a great tyrant and oppressor, and had fallen into the hands of a

greater, and now wanders, with both his eyes out, a beggar in the streets of Cairo.

In about five hours we came upon the sea, on a bold point projecting out like Carmel, the white promontory of Pliny, the ancient Scala of the Syrians. On this point stood an old khan, and we sat down under the shadow of the wall for our noonday lunch. From this situation the view was exceedingly fine. On the left were Acre and Mount Carmel; on the right the Turkish city of Sour, the ancient Tyre; and, in front, the horizon was darkened by the island of Cyprus. Almost at my feet was the wreck of a schooner, driven on the rocks only the night before, her shivered sails still flying from the masts, and the luckless mariners were alongside in a small boat, bringing ashore the remnant of the cargo. Near me, and, like me, looking out upon the movements of the shipwrecked sailors, and apparently bemoaning his own unhappy lot, was a long, awkward, dangling young man, on his way to Acre; sent by the sheik of his village to work in Ibrahim Pacha's factory for three rolls of bread a day. I asked him why he did not run away: but where could he go? If he went to a strange village, he would immediately be delivered up on the never-failing demand for soldiers. There was no help for him. He did not know that there were other lands, where men were free; and, if he had known it, the curse of poverty rested upon him, and bound him where he was. I had seen misery in Italy, Greece, Turkey, Russia,

and gallant, but conquered and enslaved Poland, but I saw it refined and perfected under the iron despotism of Mohammed Aly.

From hence the road continued, for about two hours, over a rocky precipice overhanging the sea, and so narrow that, as I sat on my horse, I could look down the steep and naked sides into the clear water below. In one place were the ruins of an old wall, probably, when the city before me was in its glory, defending the precipice. In the narrowest place we met a caravan of camels, and then descended into a sandy plain, and passing small rivulets and ruins of castles or fortresses, came to a fine stream, on the banks of which were soldiers' barracks; the horses, with their gay accoutrements, were tied near the doors of the tents, constantly saddled and bridled, and strains of military music were swelling from a band among the trees.

Near this are what are called Solomon's cisterns, supposed to have been built by King Solomon in payment for the materials furnished by Hiram, king of Tyre, towards the building of the temple. Circumstances, however, abundantly prove that these cisterns, and the aqueduct connecting them with Tyre, have been built since the time of Alexander the Great.

On the extreme end of a long, low, sandy isthmus, which seems to have crawled out as far as it could, stands the fallen city of Tyre, seeming, at a distance, to rest on the bosom of the sea. A Turkish soldier was stationed at the gate. I en-

tered under an arch so low that it was necessary to stoop on the back of my horse, and passed through dark and narrow streets, sheltered by mats stretched over the bazaars from the scorching heat of a Syrian sun. A single fishing-boat was lying in the harbour of "the crowning city, whose merchants were princes, whose traffickers were the honourable of the earth."

I left the gate of Tyre between as honest a man and as great a rogue as the sun ever shone upon. The honest man was my old Arab, whom I kept with me in spite of his bad donkey; and the rogue was a limping, sore-eyed Arab, in an old and ragged suit of regimentals, whom I hired for two days to relieve the old man in whipping the donkeys. He was a dismissed soldier, turned out of Ibrahim Pacha's army as of no use whatever, than which there could not be a stronger certificate of worthlessness. He told me, however, that he had once been a man of property, and, like honest Dogberry, had had his losses; he had been worth sixty piasters (nearly three dollars), with which he had come to live in the city; and had been induced to embark in enterprises that had turned out unfortunately, and he had lost his all.

On my arrival at Sidon I drove immediately to the Arab consular agent, to consult him about paying a visit to Lady Esther Stanhope. He told me that I must send a note to her ladyship, requesting permission to present myself, and wait her pleasure for an answer; that sometimes she

was rather capricious, and that the English consul from Beyroot had been obliged to wait two days. The state of my health would not permit my waiting anywhere upon an uncertainty. I was but one day from Beyroot, where I looked for rest and medical attendance ; but I did not like to go past, and I made my application perhaps with more regard to my own convenience and feelings than the respect due to those of the lady. My baggage, with my writing materials, had not yet arrived. I had no time to lose ; the Arab agent gave me the best he had ; and writing a note about as "big as book" on a piece of coarse Arab paper with a reed pen, and sealing it with a huge Arab wafer, I gave it to a messenger, and tumbling him out of the house, told him he must bring me an answer before daylight the next morning. He probably reached Lady Stanhope's residence about nine or ten o'clock in the evening ; and I have no doubt he tumbled in, just as he had been tumbled out at Sidon, and, demanding an immediate answer, he got one forthwith, "Her ladyship's compliments," &c. ; in short, somewhat like that which a city lady gives from the head of the stairs, "I'm not at home." I have since read M. de la Martin's account of his visit to her ladyship, by which it appears that her ladyship had regard to the phraseology of a note. Mine, as near as I can recollect it, was as follows:—"Mr. S., a young American, on the point of leaving the Holy Land, would regret exceedingly being obliged to do so without first having paid his respects

to the Lady Esther Stanhope. If the Lady Esther Stanhope will allow him that honour, Mr. S. will present himself *to-morrow* at any hour her ladyship will name." If the reader will compare this note with the letter of M. de la Martine, he will almost wonder that my poor messenger, demanding, too, an immediate answer, was not kicked out of doors. My horses were at the door, either for Beyroot or her ladyship's residence; and, when obliged to turn away from the latter, I comforted myself with a good gallop to the former. Her ladyship was exceedingly lucky, by-the-way, in not having received me; for that night I broke down at Beyroot; my travels in the East were abruptly terminated; and, after lying ten days under the attendance of an old Italian quack, with a blue frock coat and great frog buttons, who frightened me to death every time he approached my bedside, I got on board the first vessel bound for sea, and sailed for Alexandria. At Beyroot I received a letter from the friend who had taken me on board his boat at Thebes, advising me of the sickness of his lady, and that he had prevailed upon the English doctor at Beyroot to accompany him to Damascus and Baalbeck; here, too, I heard of the death of Mr. Lowell, a gentleman from Boston, who had preceded me in many parts of my tour in the East; and who had everywhere left behind him such a name that it was a pleasure for an American to follow in his steps; and here, too, I heard of the great fire, which, by the time it reached this distant land, had laid the whole of

my native city in ruins. In the midst of my troubles, however, I had three things that gave me pleasure. I met here my two friends with whom I had mounted the cataracts of the Nile, one of whom I hope one day to see in my own country; I received from the Austrian consul an assurance that the passport of my Jew friend at Hebron should be made out, and delivered forthwith to his friend there; and I saw Costigan's servant, from whom I obtained a map of the Dead Sea before referred to. For ten days I lay on the deck of a little Austrian schooner, watching the movements of a pair of turtle doves; and on the morning of the eleventh I was again off the coast of Egypt, and entering the harbour of Alexandria. Here I introduced myself to the reader; and here, if he have not fallen from me by the way, I take my leave of him, with thanks for his patient courtesy.

NOTE.

By the arrival in America of my friend Mr. Gliddon, of Cairo, of whom mention has been several times made in the foregoing pages, the author has received the following notice of the Egyptian Society. The objects of the society are sufficiently explained in the notice; and they are such as cannot fail to recommend themselves to all who feel any interest in Egypt, and the East generally. The author is personally acquainted with many of the members, particularly with Mr. Walne, Hon. Sec., who, besides being a gentleman of high literary and professional attainments, has devoted much attention, and with great success, to the study of hieroglyphics and Egyptian antiquities; and the author feels great satisfaction in being permitted to say that any individual, or literary or scientific institution, may, without further introduction, correspond with Dr. Walne in relation to any of the objects set forth in the notice.

NOTICE OF THE EGYPTIAN SOCIETY.

The impulse of modern discovery has excited a general and increasing interest respecting the antiquities of Egypt, while the unusual facilities of access both from India and Europe, coupled with the internal tranquillity of the country, are more than ever calculated to induce travellers to visit the Valley of the Nile, and examine personally the extraordinary monuments with which its banks abound.

By the munificence of his highness the viceroy, Cairo will, it is presumed, possess, at no distant period, a museum that, in Egyptian antiquities, may be expected to rival all existing collections. But the stranger visiting the capital, removed

from those conveniences to which he has been accustomed in European cities, has particularly to regret the absence of a public *library of reference*, so essential to his researches.

The want of an institution that should at once offer this desirable resource, serve as a point of union for social intercourse, and be a medium for obtaining additional information relative to Egypt and the adjacent countries, has long been felt; and it is a desire of supplying this deficiency that has suggested the formation of the Egyptian Society.

The objects of the association are:—

First. To form a rendezvous for travellers, with the view of associating literary and scientific men who may from time to time visit Egypt.

Second. To collect and record information relative to Egypt, and to those parts of Africa and Asia which are connected with or tributary to this country.

Third. To facilitate research, by enabling travellers to avail themselves of such information as may be in the power of the society to obtain, and by offering them the advantage of a library of reference containing the most valuable works on the East. The Egyptian Society is open to gentlemen of all nations, and is composed of Members, Honorary Members, and Associate Members.

Members.

The Members (the number of whom is at present limited to twenty) are the trustees of the institution, direct the disposal of the funds, and have the general government of the society. To be eligible as a Member, a gentleman must have been at least one year an Associate Member, and be recommended in writing by three Members. The election must take place at a general meeting, and be by ballot, one black ball to exclude.

Members pay an annual subscription of one guinea; but those elected after the 25th March 1837, will pay in addition an admission fee of one guinea.

The contribution of ten guineas at once constitutes a Life Member.

Honorary Members.

Honorary Members will be elected only from literary and scientific men, who have particularly distinguished themselves in relation to Egypt, or from gentlemen who have especially promoted the objects and interests of the society.

Associate Members.

With the exception of taking a part in the government of the society, Associate Members enjoy the same privileges as the Members.

To be eligible as an Associate Member, a gentleman, if not usually resident in, must at least have visited Egypt, and have passed two months either in this country, or in those parts of Africa and Asia which are immediately connected with or tributary to it. It is necessary that he be recommended in writing by two Members: the election must take place at a general meeting, and be by ballot, two black balls to exclude. Associate Members pay an annual subscription of one guinea. The contribution of five guineas at once constitutes a Life Associate Member.

Honorary Officers.

The president, treasurer, secretary, and council of management are annually elected from the Members.

The funds arising from subscriptions and donations will be applied, as far as possible, to the formation of a Library, to which the Members and Associate Members can always have free access, and to which travellers can be introduced, till such time as they become eligible to join the society. Rooms have been opened, the association possesses the nucleus of a Library, and the members have every reason to hope that, by their own exertions, and with the assistance of those who take an interest in the institution, they will soon succeed in forming a collection that, while it includes many interesting volumes on the East in general, may contain the works of all the ancient and modern authors who have made Egypt the subject of their observations.

ALFRED T. WALNE, Hon. Sec.

Cairo, July 9th, 1836.

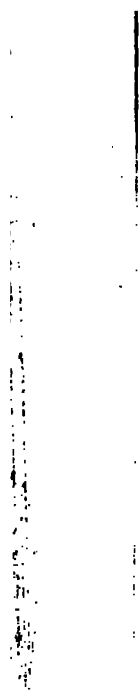
Since the above was in type the author has been favoured with a communication from the Egyptian Society, by which it appears that the objects of the society have been duly appreciated, and that it is now established upon a foundation calculated to render it eminently useful to those who may visit Egypt for the purpose of antiquarian, literary, or scientific research; but the particular favour which the author has to acknowledge now, is the interesting information that Colonel Vyse (before referred to as engaged in exploring the pyramids) has discovered no less than three new chambers over the king's chamber in the great pyramid, which he calls by the names of Wellington, Nelson, and Lady——. This last is remarkable as containing the following cartouche.



Rossellini, a learned Italian, now editing a second edition of Champollion's works, who found this cartouche in one of the tombs, reads it "Seamphis." This establishes the fact that the pyramids were not built anterior to the use of hieroglyphics, and also that Suphis, or Saophis, was the builder, as stated by Manetho, according to Mr. Wilkinson's table, about two thousand one hundred and twenty years B. C. The particulars of this interesting discovery, and the details connected with the present exploring of the pyramids, will probably soon be given to the public through Mr. Wilkinson.

THE END.

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